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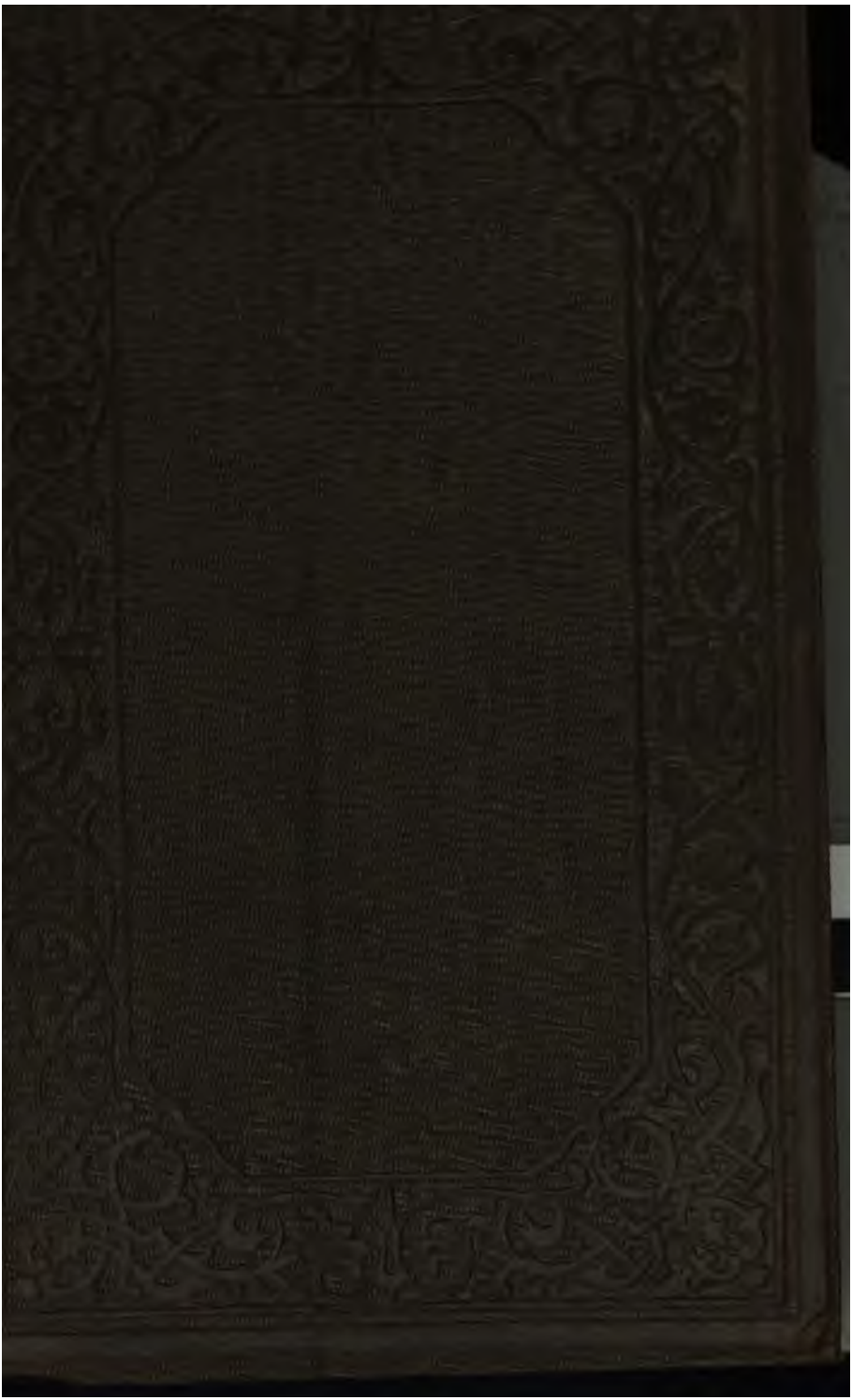

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NARRATIVE

OF A

JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD.

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VOL. I.

NARRATIVE

OF A

JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD,

COMPRISING

A WINTER-PASSAGE ACROSS THE ANDES TO CHILI,
WITH A VISIT TO THE GOLD REGIONS OF CALIFORNIA AND
AUSTRALIA, THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDS, JAVA, &c.

BY F. GERSTAECKER.

IN THREE VOLUMES.
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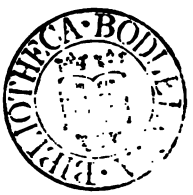

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TO

HIS DEAR LITTLE FRIEND,

SARAH MARY RICKARDS,

OF SYDNEY,

THESE VOLUMES ARE INSCRIBED

BY

THE AUTHOR.

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NARRATIVE

OF A

JOURNEY ROUND THE WORLD.

SOUTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

THE START.

It excites a singular feeling to be on board a vessel, still at anchor in the harbour of your native country, but ready to start every minute on a long, long voyage. You no longer belong to your home, although, in fact, you have not yet left it, nor have you yet begun your new wandering life. You feel only this restless waiting, this not being able to leave the ship, and hour after hour passed without your moving a step. You find yourself for once in your life between the future and the past, without a present, and wish at last for that which you have so

dreaded before—the moment when you shall bid farewell to your home.

But emigrants are not always visited by these emotions. Most of them have closed their account with their old mother country—leaving mother country also not unfrequently in debt to them, and feeling now only suspense. This spreads over the whole ship, and people walk about on deck with dissatisfied and peevish looks, grumbling and growling, and by no means in a humour for sentiment.

New passengers arrive without intermission, and each seems to have thought of getting the whole of Noah's Ark to himself, so completely do they heap the decks with boxes, and trunks, and chests, and are quite astonished to find not the least possibility of stowing them away. But after awhile they and their boxes disappear in the lower hold, and all is arranged satisfactorily.

The only quiet persons in this chaos of things and objects are the sailors. Used to the confusion, they look upon it as of too common occurrence even to deserve a thought, and step now with a really frightful indifference, through and over the passengers' goods, which for them seem hardly to exist.

Wet weather makes things, as the reader may think, only worse, and no wonder that many a poor wretch coming here with quite another ex-

pectation, looks in such a case down in those dark and sultry caves of the between-decks, which shall be to him for so many months a dreary and solitary home. How many intended emigrants, if they could throw down such a look into such a place, when their hearts were still wavering between their old home and all the splendid pictures others had given them of far-away lands, would shake their heads, and turn back from the Rubicon. But now it is too late, the die is cast, and onward they must go.

But after a week at sea everything is changed. Incredible quantities of baggage have found a place where one would at first have thought that a carpet-bag would fill up the room; and even the passengers have got used to the air in their new abode, and if they do not find it pleasant, they feel at least that it is not so disagreeable.

Our passengers for California, on board the good barque 'Talisman,' consisted of a really interesting mass of people. They were chiefly young men, who had shipped with such golden dreams and hopes, as actuated the first Spanish adventurers in searching for the long-promised El Dorado. But we were a strange company. There was neither a woman nor child on board, and the passengers were all armed to the teeth. One man carried a long single-barrelled fowling-piece, with a spade on his shoulder, and a blue

cotton umbrella under his arm. Many indeed had spades, and the arms displayed were of the most miscellaneous character, including swords, guns, dirks, muskets—ancient and modern—and forming, as a whole, such an assemblage, that they looked like the spoil of a curiosity-shop.

In this strange crowd the most singular figure was a cutler from Magdeburg, a man of really Herculean proportions, with curled beard and hair, red cheeks, and kindly-looking grey eyes. He wore a green hunting-shirt, or blouse, light pantaloons, and a white broad-brimmed felt hat. Round his waist was a white shining leather belt, nearly five inches broad, and swinging to this, first, a long straight sword, which rattled after him over the deck, secondly, a smaller hanger (Hirschfaenger) which, though of goodly dimensions, looked by the side of the sword hardly longer than a table-knife, and close to this Hirschfaenger he carried another still smaller rhuspdirk, about eighteen inches in length. On the other side he carried another long dirk, with two pistol barrels, and a proportional quantity of pistols and terzerols.

This person was attended by three companions, whose passage he had paid, and whom he was taking with him to California. They were called his satellites, or the little giants, and were dressed exactly like himself, in the same green hunting-

shirt and white belt, the same broad-brimmed felt hat and large beard, only their arms, pistols and knives, were rather smaller in proportion to their own stature. The giant was a most good-natured fellow, letting everybody take his sword and knives from their scabbards; and he wore a continual smile on his broad and not unhandsome features.

He could not, I was told, ride on horseback, and therefore had on board a small hand-waggon or cart, to be drawn by the little giants, when he got ashore.

It was on Thursday, the 22nd of March, that we came first into green water, and left the last buoy of the Weser behind us. We skimmed along before a rattling breeze through the skipping waves. But the motion of the vessel, particularly right before the wind, was strong enough to make most of the passengers feel "very cheap," as Jonathan has it. Only some dozen could keep up their heads; and while we passed the North Sea and Channel flying, all those who a few days before had been such unruly characters, and dreamt of nothing but gold and fortunes, were lying in their berths sea-sick, sighing and groaning in the most distressing manner. On Sunday, after a run of sixty hours, we made the longitude of the Scilly Isles, and were now at last in the open sea.

The same splendid breeze that made us cross the path of many a poor homeward-bound vessel, working her way against the wind, carried us to Madeira, and there kindly gave us in charge of the north-east trade-winds, which wafted us with their balmy odours through smooth and sparkling water, to warmer and more genial climes.

As long as we had a rough sea and cold and unfriendly weather, there existed no quieter and more peaceable people in the world, than our hundred and two passengers. No grumbling or quarrelling was heard all day, and at night the sounds under hatches were chiefly snores. But hardly did they feel the wind getting duller, the air warmer, and the waves settling down, than out they came again on deck to eat and drink, grumble and quarrel. There was directly something the matter with the water, and something with the bread; the meat smelled, and the coffee did not; the berths were too small, and this one's trunk, and that one's carpet-bag were stowed away where they could not find them, which of course induced a request to the mate to break open the hold directly, and overhaul the boxes in quest of the missing articles. Cursing and swearing were sometimes drowned in laughing and singing, not unfrequently interrupted by quarrelling parties, who only agreed again in abusing the skipper, and the provisions and water.

Our voyage in itself did not embrace many incidents. On the 13th of April, we made the islands of Cape Verd, and passed right between them, leaving San Nicolas to larboard, and next morning having close on our lee-bow that gigantic and desolate-looking island Fogo.

The rocky face of this singular volcano seemed entirely barren, and we could not make out the least bush or shrub; but the rising sun shed, from a clear and unbroken sky, her soft light upon rough and towering masses, and overspread them with a rosy trembling lustre.

Among the noisy passengers—noisy in play or quarrel—there was one man, who took part in no play or game, and spoke with nobody, who hardly ever ate anything, and what little he did eat, took in such a way as to show plainly that he only regarded food as a necessity, and partook of it merely to keep himself alive. He always tried to find, in some corner of the deck, the most deserted part of the ship, and there he sat by himself, his head resting on his elbow, and his back turned to the life on board, while his eye searched the horizon, or hung listless on the blue and swelling deep.

This man was home-sick. One day, he came up to me, while I was leaning on the anchor stocks, watching a small shoal of bonitas, and addressing me, the tears glistening in his eyes, asked me, for

God's sake, to speak to the captain, and obtain permission for him to leave the ship in the first homeward-bound vessel we should meet. He said—and he sobbed more than he spoke, though he tried to hide his emotion as much as possible—he had acted thoughtlessly in leaving a happy home, which, poor as it was, contained his wife and three lovely children. He said that he could not forget the moment when he bade farewell to his wife, and when his children hung crying round his neck, and begged him not to leave them. These thoughts would not let him rest, and he saw, he felt now, how wrong, how heartless, how cruel had been his conduct, in so relentlessly turning his face from home. But they might meet a vessel, which would take him home again; and if he had spent his small capital in paying his passage to California, though he was only a weaver, and must now work hard day and night to make up for lost time, he would work cheerfully in his own home, and for his own wife and children.

As the man found more and more words for the utterance of his grief, the tears—the soothing tears—chased each other down his pale and care-worn cheeks. I tried everything in my power to give his thoughts another direction, and his heart some hope. I promised him, to be sure, to ask the captain for the permission he sought; but what good could it do him, and where would he find in

the open sea a vessel, homeward-bound, the captain of which would lay back to take a poor, homesick passenger on board with his baggage. He became calm, at last, and thanking me for the kind words I had spoken to him, as he said, went down into his berth, and I saw him no more that day.

About eight days afterwards, coming nearer and nearer to the line, Neptune paid us a visit, and got paid very well for his trouble, finding a great number of greenhorns on board.

The festivities created by this incident had hardly passed, when we saw a sail coming right up to us. It was the English packet 'Agincourt,' Captain Nisbett, who sent a boat to us to get, if possible, some German newspapers for a party of German and Dutch passengers, whom the 'Agincourt' had taken in at Cape Town. We gave the young officer, who came on board, all we could spare, and half-an-hour afterwards the large and beautiful craft was only a speck on the horizon.

My poor home-sick friend, who had been looking eight days before with painful hope for such an accident, though no ship would have waited to take him on board, stood on the gangway in his old place as long as she was in sight, silent and sad, and without moving a limb, never turning his eye for a second from the strange vessel; and there he stood after the sun had sunk behind the

horizon, and spread darkness over the vast deep, with his eyes fixed on the point at which the ship had disappeared. He had spoken to me again the day before, but no longer wished to leave the vessel, having reconciled himself to going on to California.

After a succession of most disagreeable calms, each of which laid us up for about a week, we had a good and refreshing breeze from the south-east, the common trade-wind in these latitudes; and this breeze brought us some fine sport with porpoises. Though we speared several, however, we could never get them on deck. The fact was, that when the fish first showed themselves, there was, ten to one, no harpoon to be found, or the line was tangled or missing; or, should this accidentally have been in order—and I for one did my best to keep it so—the ten or twelve stout fellows planted at the line, to pull altogether at the word, would get tired at the critical moment, and all our care would be thrown away.

In the latitude of Cape Frio, and not far from the Brazilian coast, we got a touch of the tropics in a tolerably strong pampero. The proper place for these winds is the mouth of La Plata, but sometimes they reach up as high as this, and even higher, not unfrequently doing great damage among the shipping. A few days afterwards, indeed, we saw a Brazilian man-of-war, which had

got dismasted in this very pampero, just before the entrance of the Bay of Rio de Janeiro.

For several days we lay under close-reefed top-sails, and, at the same time, had the pleasure to know that we were driving considerably out of our course. A great many of the passengers became sea-sick again, but the storm did not last long, and on the 10th of May, we were once more able to set sail. On the 11th, we made Cape Frio, and from thence kept the picturesque coast of the Brazils in sight all day, reaching on the morrow the entrance of the Sugar-loaf Mountain.

Early in the afternoon, we beheld that beautiful panorama, which surrounds one of the most splendid harbours of the world, and the closer we neared the land, the more distinctly did the mountains and hills gain life and colour. Long and seemingly straight ranges grew up in single groups, showing separate peaks and ridges. We could mark the outlines of vegetation, and even of trees and shrubs; and there, on those beautiful little island twins—Naya and Maya, as the Portuguese call them—rose the first cocoa-palms, with their slender stems and graceful leaves, nodding a welcome to the foreign visitors.

CHAPTER II.

RIO DE JANEIRO.

In the tropics, night follows immediately on the setting of the sun; and entering soon after sun-down the Sugar-loaf Gate, as the entrance to the harbour is called from the conical and most singular-shaped hill on the southern head, we could just see the lights shine out from the opposite coast, where the city lies, and the dark outlines of the nearest ships, the whole surrounded by high and towering masses of mountain ridges.

Inside the entrance we were hailed from the northern shore—from the Fort Santa Cruz—but the voice sounded as if it came from the deep, and the words being, of course, Portuguese, we could not understand a word of it. But our super-cargo spoke the language, having some time ago lived many years in the Brazils; and he and the gentleman in the fort conversed a little while in such unintelligible roars, as are heard occasionally

at sea, very much to the satisfaction of both parties, from two passing ships.

A few minutes afterwards we dropped our anchor not far from a brig we had nearly scraped in coming in, and which also had German passengers on board. She had come from Hamburgh, and brought emigrants to the Brazils.

I waited impatiently for sunrise, and with daybreak I was up; but could see nothing of the shore, as a thin fog or mist lay over the water, and even the nearest ridges of the mountains were but dimly visible. Soon, however, the sun arose; I could see the red orb through the vapoury veil. Higher and higher it ascended; the fog sunk down to the water's edge, and hills and valleys, palm-crowned isles, white shining forts, and shady groves and villas, with hundreds and hundreds of ships and skimming boats rose as by magic into view.

Where can I find words to picture the beauty, the grandeur of that scene, as it appeared at that moment? Even the most indifferent of our passengers stood on deck, without uttering a sound, and saw in mute astonishment a new and glorious world spring up around. Their first amazement overcome, their tongues again won utterance, and the words—"beautiful," "splendid," "glorious," were heard on every side.

Our principal care now was, to get as soon as possible on shore; but this could not be done till

we were reported by the medical authorities to be free from any epidemic. The doctor came at last in his long yawl, pulled by eight negroes; and as there was not a sick man on board, he gave permission to crew and passengers to go ashore as soon and as long as they pleased.

He had not left the ship—for we were all cocked and primed, and perfectly ready to go off—when down dropped our yawl; and four of our sailors carolling forth an old German song: "The Brazils are not far from here," pulled us ashore.

The city of Rio de Janeiro made a profound impression upon us, as long as we saw it from afar; but it loses a great deal of its beauty—and with how many things upon this wide world is not that the case—on a nearer acquaintance. The streets are, with very few exceptions, narrow and dirty, and masses of slaves, with innumerable coloured variations, meet the eye wherever it wanders, exciting a painful feeling in the mind of the European, which even the beauty of surrounding nature, hardly visible indeed in those high and narrow streets, cannot soften.

But however much we might have been astonished at everything we saw—for nearly everything was new to us—we, on our part, could by no means astonish the natives. "California," was their invariable cry, wherever they met any one of our party; and as the harbour was at the same

time perfectly filled with emigrant ships for that country, the word was constantly ringing along the streets whenever any emigrants appeared.

One of our fellow-passengers, a little Jew from Berlin, who dressed exceedingly fine, and, as he thought, exactly in the fashion of Rio de Janeiro, became at last so annoyed by these incessant exclamations, that he wished to free himself from them; and thinking the broad-brimmed black hat he wore, the only possible mark by which his tormentors could guess the place of his destination, bought himself a new and genuine Brazilian hat —not even trusting the one he had on board, though it was exactly of the same shape. He paid an extravagant price for a rather indifferent hat; but as he smilingly stepped out from the store with this prize on his head, which was to class him among the sons of the soil, the first sound that reached his ear was the dreaded and detested greeting of "California."

A bull-fight being announced, some of us repaired to the arena, to view the spectacle. We found a pretty large arena surrounded by raised and guarded wooden benches and boxes, just white-washed enough to soil our dark clothing. On one side were some large square boards, painted over and ornamented with homely pictures of men, behind which, as I found afterwards, the bull-fighter sought shelter when hard pressed; and

all round the ring were fastened long pieces of wood, to afford him the means of climbing up out of the reach of the enraged animals, when the other retreat was not accessible.

A couple of very indifferent clowns tried to be funny in the centre of the arena—one of them, a counterfeit negro, executed also a few negro dances, but nobody laughed. The Spaniards looked on as sober as judges; and an English sailor, a little the worse for liquor, jumped down, and tried to beat the clown; but made off amidst roars of laughter and applause when he saw the doors suddenly thrown open, expecting, of course, that nothing less than a couple of ferocious bulls, or some other wild animals, were coming in. But the bulls were not ready yet; and the new-comers were only two of the fighters on horseback, followed by six or eight others on foot, all attired in gaudy and glittering dresses.

Behind them sneaked another figure, which was no less a person than the fiend himself, who had been promised to the public in the large posting-bills with prominent letters, as El Diabo. He was dressed in his favourite colours, yellow and red, which run in long stripes, about three inches broad, from head to foot; he sported besides a small pair of black and tolerably soft horns, and a long pliant tail of the same colour, which dragged behind through the sand. At first,

we all thought he would be one of the most valorous combatants of the whole; but as soon as he saw the bull coming, he slipped behind one of the screens, and appeared soon afterwards close to the main entrance behind the planks, and safe enough from all danger.

One of the horsemen, clad as a Spanish knight, and bearing an extraordinary resemblance to the Emperor Napoleon, opened the battle; but the bull showed the white feather, and would not fight. A second bull was forthcoming—a little lively animal; it soon broke one of its horns, which were all guarded by round wooden or metal balls, and was unable to prolong the contest. A little black bull followed afterwards, but worried by a numberless crowd of men, and having his dulled horns rendered nearly harmless, he did little to enliven the scene, and soon tired out the spectators.

Finally, a kind of small pavilion, made of thin lattice-work, pasted over with red paper, and having four open doors, was raised in the arena, and in this was placed a table and chairs, with some plates and knives and forks, when the whole party of men pretended to sit down to breakfast, while another wild bull was let into the arena. Of course he was expected to break into the pavilion, and upset the table, and scatter the banquet; but the bull was too well-bred to do any such thing, and nothing could induce him to disturb the convivial party.

The public, wearied at last at seeing none of their hopes fulfilled, and the sun, at the same time, sinking lower and lower in the west, turned their attention to the nameless gentleman in the red and yellow, and demanded with loud and clamorous shouts, his appearance on the stage.

But Diabo did not seem to feel the least inclination to accept the invitation, and as the uproar continued, disappeared behind the planks. But the spectators now grew exasperated, and after a perfect revolution, the manager was obliged to bring his satanic majesty to light again. The poor devil of a devil had to come forth, *nolens, volens;* and hardly did the bull get a glimpse of his red and yellow figure, than he sunk his horns and made at him. Diabo had no time to get out of his way, and was pitched by the infuriated animal bodily to the ground. The other performers now jumped between, and succeeded at last in turning the bull's attention from his victim; but Diabo had had enough for that night, and left as quick as he could, limping away amidst a perfect hurricane of laughter and whistling.

But the spectators soon grew weary of the new bull, though when we left, ten or twelve men were still tormenting the poor beast, now nearly in the dark, for the sun had set, and night was fast drawing on.

Next morning we hired horses and galloped out

of town to see the green woods and plantations. The Brazilian horses are small, but lively and persevering animals, and nearly always move in a short and easy gallop. But the merchants and planters who live in the country on their plantations, and of whom we met a great many coming to town, chiefly ride mules, which, though they do not progress as quickly as horses, certainly go more easy.

The environs of Rio are really beautiful—the quiet, mirror-like bay with its forest of masts, and the boats darting to and fro, the nice and luxuriant gardens, with their orange and coffee-trees, bananas, palms, and blossom-covered bushes; the high picturesque mountains and rocks, which raise their rough and broken heads over each other far in the distance; formed a picture as striking as it was lovely. The scene, moreover, was animated in the extreme; and the white population and the slaves were equally busy. The negroes carried their burdens to market with a merry song; the cattle-driver passed along with his wild little ponies, the merchant and planter on his mule.

I felt very sorry to be obliged to depart so soon from this beautiful country, but there was no remedy. I had paid my passage to California by the 'Talisman,' but I did not like the passage round Cape Horn; not on account of its danger, as the ship was good and new, but I shrank from the idea of

being boxed up in a ship for so long a time, cut off from the world, and without the least chance of seeing anything of interest. I thought, therefore, of going over to Buenos Ayres, and crossing the Pampas on horseback, by which I might reach Valparaiso in time to get on board the 'Talisman,' at that port, and continue my journey in her to California. But I heard such a bad account in Rio Janeiro of the Argentine Republic, that at first it made me hesitate. I was told that the people themselves were of a false, treacherous, and blood-thirsty disposition, and to make matters worse, the Pampas Indians, who had lately rebelled against Rosas, were now pouring across the Pampas in wild hordes, and spreading death and desolation wherever they showed themselves. Even should I escape these savages, and gain the foot of the Cordilleras, there I would be opposed by another, and, in fact, insurmountable obstacle, as at this season of the year, the Cordilleras were "snow-locked," and no human being could pass them.

In this dilemma, I remembered that when I intended, in the winter of 1838, to walk by myself from Canada to Texas, everybody told me that it would be impossible; but I made the journey, and got well and safe back again; and this reminiscence now determined me to pursue the route I at first proposed, regardless of the terrible stories which everywhere met my ear.

Preparations I needed hardly any, as I should take only the most necessary things with me, and it was only important to be well-armed. I provided myself, therefore, with a double-barrelled gun, a brace of pistols, and my old American bowie-knife, and then found myself perfectly equipped for the Pampas. I took also a good blanket, half-a-dozen shirts and socks, and a grey woollen-hunting shirt, with high water-boots and a black broad-brimmed hat.

Luckily there was at the time a small Hamburg schooner under the flag of the Argentine Republic, lying in the bay, ready to start for Buenos Ayres. She had come in from the Cape Verd Islands, loaded with salt, only to inquire the price and be off again, if she did not sell her cargo. The captain, a German, as jovial a little fellow as ever stamped a quarter-deck, having made up his mind to seek the Buenos Ayres market, I soon agreed with him for my passage. The fourth day after my arrival at Rio, we were to sail, and I was left to enjoy myself in the meantime as much as I could.

It would at that time have troubled anybody to find enjoyment in Rio, the hotels and taverns being all crowded with passengers for California, and the most extravagant prices being asked for the humblest board and lodging, though it often did not include the accommodation of a bed. The

bills for this sumptuous entertainment were always made out in reis, the currency of the country; and though the amount was only a few dollars in this coin, one seemed to expend a fortune in a dinner. Take the following bill for a breakfast for three, at a French coffee-house, as an example:

Chicken	2,000 reis
Salad	1,280 „
Cucumbers	1,280 „
Bread	240 „
Oranges	400 „
Cigars (six) . . .	600 „
Wine	800 „
	6,600 reis.

The whole sum amounting to little more than three dollars and a half.

At last I got safely with all my things on board the 'San Martin.' Up went our anchor, a light but steady breeze swelled our sails; and two hours afterwards the splendid bay of Rio de Janeiro lay behind me like a beautiful dream.

CHAPTER III.

FROM RIO DE JANEIRO TO BUENOS AYRES.

For the first day or two we had very light winds, sometimes even calms, but that did not last long, though I found that I must not count on a quick passage of five or six days, as the wind became contrary; and on the 21st, a flying pampero turned the peaceful swelling ocean into a wild and roaring sea with mountainous waves, which tossed about our nut-shell of a vessel in the most alarming manner.

The pampero—for I remember it too well not to say at least a few words about it—is a kind of periodical gale, which derives its name from the wide pampas or plains in the west and south-west, over which it blows, gaining force and power the farther it proceeds. The first sign of a pampero is generally a sharp north wind, which changes gradually more and more to the west, and hardly has the wind gained this point, when a heavy rain sets

in, and with this comes the first squall—the first puff of the pampero. So abruptly does this sometimes happen, and so rapidly does the wind, in such a case, fly round the compass, that many a ship, whose captain has been ignorant of the premonitory signs, has lost her masts, before a sail could be reefed or taken in, and not a few have been wrecked on the low and treacherous banks of the wide and desolate river. When the fury of the pampero has been expended, the wind commonly changes towards the north, or south-east, and at the same time becomes more moderate.

On the 26th, getting in sight of the northern shore, we observed some low hills in the distance, and on the 27th, made the Island of Lobos, so-called from the immense quantity of seals that frequent its shores. We saw hundreds of these animals in the water, and the captain, who wanted a few skins, offered to let down the boat if I would endeavour to kill some. A few minutes later we were in full chase, and I shot eight without capturing one. As quick as they were struck by the ball, they rose out of the water and showed their bleeding skulls, but sunk before we could get near enough to lay hold of them. At last I shot one in the neck, and it struck furiously about in the water, giving us time to come near and seize one of its fins.

There had been a dead calm the whole after-

noon, and the weather as fine and warm as we could wish, but we had hardly got the seal on board the boat, when we heard the speaking-trumpet of the captain, hailing us to return. Knowing directly that there was something amiss, we pulled back as hard as we could, and then found that the barometer had fallen in such a way as to give a fair promise for another pampero. The sailors, indeed, had just taken in the light canvas, reefed the topsails, and made everything snug, when the pampero came with a vengeance. We could hear it roar over the waters, from afar. In a few minutes, and before it had even time to blow very hard, the wind changed over to the west, and a quarter of an hour afterwards, we had as fine a pampero again, with a perfect deluge of rain, as heart could wish for. The storm howled through the rigging, and whistled through the blocks, while the few yards of canvas given to the wind, were stretched to the utmost, so that we had to lose no time in taking them in. At the same time, the sea rose, but the storm had so much power that it clipped the waves as soon as they lifted their heads above the level of the main rolling sea, carrying the white and glittering spray away with it.

Before night set in, that small island we had made in the morning, had long sunk below the

horizon, and we were drifting on the open sea back again.

The storm raged all night—the rain splashed, the sea washed on deck, and the little vessel got so unruly, that I was twice pitched out of my berth. The next day there was very little difference. At table the plates jumped about like living things; no spoonful of soup could be considered safe until it was swallowed, and if you wanted both hands to eat with, you wanted, at the same time, both legs to hold on by. It was a miserable day, and, to console us, the wind blew right in our teeth, and drove us steadily to leeward.

On the second day of the pampero we beheld a most singular spectacle, which I shall never forget. A high sea was running, and the howling west wind lashed the waves furiously, while the small, but heavily-laden craft worked up and down, sometimes butting her head right against a perfect mass of seething foam, which made her tremble down to her bottom, sometimes rising again into the arms of another roller, when the voice of a sailor-boy directed my attention to an object ahead. The little fellow, who was as pale as a ghost, stretched out his one hand towards the sea, and following the direction indicated, I perceived a large wooden cross, which swam on the waves,

and, raised up by the rolling sea, at this very minute stood nearly upright, not twenty yards before the bow of the vessel. The next minute it disappeared among the foaming waters, which swept it past, but in a few seconds it stood up again, this time half-covered by the wave, and then it disappeared.

Fortunately we had no priest on board, or he would certainly have seen a dreadful warning in such a sign. As it was, some of the sailors did not half like it, and looked rather gloomily after the swimming piece of wood.

Where it came from it would be difficult to imagine, but probably it had been washed away from a grave-yard, or from some secluded spot close to the beach, where in former times a corpse had been washed ashore, and buried where it was found.

The captain reckoned on a south wind coming after the pampero, and in this expectation hugged rather close the right shore of the Plate River, just below the Punta de Piedras, which juts far out towards the east. But instead of a south wind, we got a real honest north-easter, and were now stuck in a corner, and could not get out. Hence we had to crawl on short tacks slowly and tediously up to the Punta del Indio, opposite to which a light-ship was moored—at that time, and I really believe even up

to this, the only one in the La Plata. Here we were to find a pilot, who would take us up to the outer road of Buenos Ayres.

The closer we drew to the light-ship the more the wind bettered, and we had hardly got the pilot—an old grey-headed American—when we were able to brace up our yards, and run with a light but favourable breeze up-stream.

It is a nasty water this La Plata, full of banks and dangerous shoals; and we had, as the breeze freshened, to keep one man, and sometimes two, constantly in the chains, throwing the lead. A vessel has, therefore, really to feel her way through the dangers that surround her on every quarter; for no shore is to be seen, except occasionally a low, dark strip of land, with a few scattered trees or high bushes. But the old American knew what he was about, and seemed to be a sober, quiet fellow, even refusing, when he came on board, a little glass of absynth I offered him. He told me that he hardly ever drank anything.

With the setting sun the wind rose higher and higher, and after dark we had a stiff south-easterly breeze, just strong enough to carry what sail we wanted, and to go up-stream about seven knots an hour.

Right in our wake we had a Swedish brig, which, coming over from the east to take the

western channel of the Ortis bank, could get no pilot, as we had taken the last from the light-ship, and she was now doing her best to keep us in sight. She had hard work of it, our little schooner shooting like a duck through the water.

At two o'clock in the morning—an hour sooner than the pilot had expected—we saw the anchored ships in the outer road. Being rather close upon them, we steered a couple of points higher, dropped our light canvas, clewed up the great and foresail, and five minutes later, as we discerned the distant lights of the city, we dropped our anchor.

CHAPTER IV.

BUENOS AYRES AND THE SURROUNDING COUNTRY.

THE roadstead of Buenos Ayres is by no means favourably situated, for only very small vessels can come within a mile, or a mile and a half of the town, while all those which draw above ten feet have to stay out about four miles on the river, which is only very little better than the open sea.

Our little schooner rolled so heavily on the high waves which rolled up from below, that we had to stretch out a stay-sail, to keep her a bit steadier; but we found even that did very little service. With such a wind, boats can hold no communication with the shore, as the breakers would dash them against the rocks at the landing, and consequently we had to stop the first day on board. It was now Sunday, just a week since I had shot seals in the mouth of the river.

On the second day, the wind abating a little, we saw two men-of-wars' boats pass to shore; but

our pilot thought it too dangerous for us to run the risk, and endeavoured to persuade us to wait a day longer. The fact was, he had some very good reasons for staying a little longer in the neighbourhood of our cupboard. After all, he had got to like my absynth; and if it was a fact that he hardly ever tasted strong drinks, he made for once an exception in my favour. As soon as the anchor touched the ground, he remembered the liquor, and came down for a dram, and from that time he stuck to the bottle like a cork. There was yet a small drop left, and he did not wish to see that wasted. But the captain, not wanting to wait any longer, as several other vessels had come in, most of them with heavy freight, and also carrying salt, was urgent to go on shore, and determined at least to make the attempt.

The old pilot, finding that we would really stop no longer on board, took a parting dram, but a good one, and declared his readiness to accompany us. My luggage did not take long to ship. My gun I took between my knees, resolved, if we had to swim for it, to have it handy; and away we went, rocking and jumping over the rolling waves, with a stout breeze standing stiff and full in our little sail, at the rate of about seven knots an hour. But though landing with such a breeze right against a rocky and tolerable

surfy shore, was a little dangerous, we got safely on terra firma, without even a wetting.

Up to this moment the boat had demanded my entire attention, and the sail, as long as we skimmed along before the wind, shut out the whole view towards the city; but now the sail came down by the run, having nearly the same effect as if a curtain had been drawn away; and I really do not know from that moment forward what we did, or even how we got out of the boat, so entirely was I taken up with the new and strange scene by which I found myself so suddenly surrounded.

Right before me—so close that I could have thrown a small pebble through the open door of the nearest house—lay Buenos Ayres. The shore, over whose rocky cliffs the breakers drove with resistless violence, swarmed with the most fantastic-looking figures I ever had dreamt of. Dark and sun-burnt faces with strongly-marked profiles, peered at us from under black or red caps, astonished at our landing in such a surf with a long-boat, and perhaps with their curiosity excited by our outlandish appearance.

Red was the fashionable colour in this country; and wherever the eye turned, a blood-red poncho, or cap, or waistcoat presented itself. Even the captain and pilot had adopted the prevailing taste, and throwing open their over-coats, displayed gor-

geous red waistcoats, vieing with those of the natives. Round their hats, too, they wore red ribbons; and red ribbons, emblazoned with some black letters, dangled from their button-holes.

The picturesque style of the men's dress, heightened the effect of the lively colours. Among the lower class, the head is covered by a red cap stuck rather saucily on one side; round the neck they invariably wear a red handkerchief, and from below this the poncho, a large square piece of cloth, with a small slit in the middle, just large enough to allow the head to pass through, hangs in easy folds over the shoulders, when it is buttoned up over the right arm, so as to allow the limb free action. Tasseled drawers encase the legs, and another vestment is fastened first behind the back, on the belt, and then taken up between the knees, forming a second poncho, which they call the cheripaw. Shoes are worn by some, but the guacho, as the gentleman of the Pampas is called, despises tanned leather, and wears boots made of the hide stripped from the hind feet of a young horse, not unfrequently killed expressly for this very purpose. From this bota, as it is named, the hair is cut off, and the two first toes stick out at the end, and just fit the small stirrups used here in riding.

Thus attired, and having a knife about two feet long sticking in a belt behind his back, the guacho hangs in his saddle, the bridle lazily resting on the

pommel by his left hand, while the right is propped up against the coiled lasso, which is never wanting, and he watches with dark and attentive brows the movements of the kringo, or foreigner, whom he detests. Then throwing himself suddenly back, he claps spurs to his horse, and gallops away over the beach with the swiftness of the wind.

Even the houses in this country have something peculiar in their aspect, and their dark bricks, flat roofs, and small, square, grated windows seize the attention at once. I could have stopped there, at the very landing, half a day just looking at these quaint dwellings, and the passing and repassing of the denizens, had not the captain abruptly told me to pick up my gun and saddle-bags and follow him to the custom-house.

We were not kept long waiting at this barrier, and I took up my quarters at the very next door, in a private boarding-house kept by a Mrs. Davies, and which proved to be a good and comfortable place.

My first care now was to make some inquiries respecting my intended route across the Pampas and Cordilleras to Valparaiso, and had I been one easily frightened, what I learned would at once have decided me. There was not a person that I spoke to but told me it was at this time of the year, with the Indians in full rebellion, sweeping in murderous bands across the country, an enter-

prise which it would be downright madness to attempt. As to the Indians, such desperate savages were never before heard of, and I was gravely informed that they never made prisoners except young girls whom they carried away to their wild haunts, simply cutting the throats of their male captives and then letting them run. Even should I reach Mendoza — almost an impossibility — I should have to stop there at least till December or January, as the mountain gullies and paths, at this time of the year, were impenetrable, being perfectly locked up by immense quantities of snow.

Mr. T. Graham, of Ohio, the American consul, to whom I am really under great obligations for his incessant kindness and courtesy, did all in his power to try and obtain some more cheering information for me, but to no purpose. In short, every one tried to dissuade me from the journey, but I determined, be the consequence what it might, to set out.

Meanwhile, I devoted the few days I was to spend in Buenos Ayres, to seeing as much as I could of the country. Feeling generally a great interest in emigration, and being in fact commissioned by our, at that time, governing central power, to make an official report of the capabilities of all those lands which I should think eligible for such a purpose, I took great pains to ascertain the real state of the country, and made several

excursions into the interior with this view. I found it remarkably promising ground for the herdsman as well as the farmer. But in truth, this part of the world presents a very singular appearance to one accustomed to our northern clime. The entire want of trees in the plains, called by the inhabitants the campo, is a striking feature in the landscape. As far as the eye can reach, nothing breaks the view on any side. In the neighbourhood of the town there are low bushy hedges, or fences of aloe and cactus, but farther on is the wide, grassy plain, unrelieved by any object.

The aloes, with their flower stems and large, fleshy leaves, fringed with hard and dangerous thorns, have a very pretty appearance, and sometimes rise to a height of twenty-four feet. They also make most excellent fences, even better than the cactus, for no horse or cow, or even pig, will venture to crawl between them, so closely do the sharp leaves grow; and once in growth, they need no more attention, but, on the contrary, continually give forth new shoots for other fences.

So badly off are the settlers here, and even the inhabitants of the towns for fuel, that they plant groves of peach-trees, and when they are a few years old, cut them down for fire-wood. This is, of course, a great drawback in respect to their making the most profit out of their herds of cattle

and sheep, as they can never obtain the tallow of the animals so cheaply as to make the boiling down remunerative.

The soil seems exceedingly good, and wherever I inquired—and I found round there a great many of my own countrymen in the province—I was informed that the land would give, with the least cultivation, a very good harvest, and produce excellent wheat and sweet potatoes.

On my first trip I passed an old monastery, now in a most desolate state, the walls, in many places, cracked and tumbled down. The church was plundered of everything, but the wooden altar was yet untouched, and on this were hanging some tattered rags of the former embroidered altar-cloth. Here and there, too, high up in a corner, too elevated to be easily got down, were some old forgotten nosegays of artificial flowers, as faded as if their bloom had once been real, and which, in former times, had probably adorned the shrine of some old saint or martyr.

This place was inhabited by a company of Pampas Indians, who had been taken prisoners in one of the late wars with the governor, and were now kept here, apparently free, but in reality, carefully guarded. Rosas gave them an allowance of beef, without mustard, every day, water they had hard by, and they found a shelter in the old crazy cells of the deserted monastery, where they had

struck camp, and stretched their beef-hides in every direction. What did they want more?

These were the first Pampas Indians I had seen. A stout-built, strong race of people they were, with prominent cheek-bones, low foreheads and dark restless eyes. Their hair was black and long, like that of their northern brethren, whom they resembled also in colour, and in their whole appearance, except that they were not quite so tall. They were as dirty a set as one could wish to see.

Turning back to town, I passed Governor Rosas's quinta, or summer residence, situated close to the bank of the river, and surrounded by a growth of tolerably high willows, which gave the whole place a pleasant and shady appearance. The quinta itself looks like a large colonnade, in a square, or block. It is a low and homely-looking building, surrounded on the inner as outer side by columns, which support verandahs, as retreats from the heat of the sun.

Not far from the quinta there stands one of the most singular garden-houses imaginable. This is nothing else than a real American brig, standing high and dry, like Moses in the bulrushes, among the willows of the bank. It leans against high props, and is provided, for the accommodation of crew and passengers, with a wide and commodious staircase. This brig was blown once, by a south-

eastern gale, on this place, high up on the bank, without the least possibility of getting her down again. Governor Rosas bought the hull and made a pavilion of it. The lower masts, crossed by a couple of spars, remain standing; and the interior, steerage and cabin, has been formed into one large and lofty saloon. Formerly, music might be had on board, through the agency of a barrel organ; but the Argentine gentlemen, who were the performers, thought the machinery would work as well backwards as forwards, and spoiled the organ by grinding the wrong way.

Rosas kept at the quinta half-a-dozen tamed avestruses, or South American ostriches, three guanakas, a species of lama, an Argentine lion or puma, and a tiger from Paraguay, secured only by a very thin chain round the neck, which he could have broken, I am sure, with one bound, had he but tried. But they had cut his claws and filed his teeth, and it was a consolation to reflect that, if he should break loose, he could only squeeze one to death.

Between the quinta and the town are the barracks of the regulars, and I stopped here awhile to see a parcel of blood-red artillery manœuvre with tolerable dexterity.

Strangers are allowed to look at the regulars at exercise, but when the militia are ordered out, every

one else is ordered in, and nobody dares to show his face, either in the streets, or even on the top of his own house, or behind the windows. The militia and the irregular soldiers are really the most desperate-looking characters I have ever seen. Here, would be observed a pair of trowsers and one shoe; there, two shoes and no trowsers, but merely the cheripaw. A handkerchief would be tied round the head, or it would be buried in a red cap; while the eye fell on uniforms of all colours, or no uniforms at all, guns of all sizes, and many without guns, and ranged on every side.

It formed, some time ago, one of the greatest amusements of Europeans to watch this array, and every manœuvre provoked new laughter. But Rosas did not like this; and as he could do with his republicans whatever he pleased, he passed a bill to have every store shut while the militia were out, the pretext being that the foreigners drove their trade with advantage while the citizens of the republic were on duty in the service of their country. So far, this law would only have been just, but Rosas went farther, shutting up everybody in their houses; and whoever was found abroad, was liable to be taken up and punished by fine or imprisonment. Even travellers had to turn in, as soon as they came to a place where the militia were training; the herdsman had to leave his cattle, and the farmer his plough, and only those

boys who took care of the sheep, were allowed to remain in the fields.

Rosas was a severe dictator, and did not allow much joking with his laws, but it may be urged in his favour that he had a wild and rough set of subjects, and it required a strong hand to keep them in order. A stronger or more pitiless one than his it would have been hard to find, even in that wild country.

Rosas took very good care that they should never forget whose government they were under, and as it had grown a perfect law for the citizens of the republic to wear the red waistcoast, so they were obliged to assume also a red ribbon at the button-hole, inscribed with this device:

"Viva la confederacion Argentina mueran los salcajes, asquerosos, inmundos, Unitarios" (The Argentine republic shall prosper, but perish the savage, dirty, and undergrown Unitarios). A fine sentiment, at any rate.

This motto meets the eye of the stranger everywhere. There is no proclamation issued without this being at the head of it; no paper is printed, no public or private advertisement appears, without the threatening words. They are stamped on the theatre bills, and present themselves five or six times in every almanac. They must be the first words in every written document; and even on every letter a citizen of the Argentine republic

sends by the post, he has to write on the address his "viva" for the republic, and his "mueran" for her enemies—it may be for himself.

The life in the streets of the city possesses much interest for the stranger. The wild forms of the guachos (as the inhabitants of the country are called) with their flowing kerchiefs over their heads, and picturesque ponchos, lend a peculiar aspect to the scene. Large clumsy waggons, drawn by oxen, roll slowly along, with their gigantic wheels often ten feet high. Every morning, guacho boys come early to town on horseback, with two tin cans full of milk, but having one naked leg hanging down from the sheep-skin saddle, and the other foot drawn up under their seat. There are also ragged black soldiers, sometimes real specimens, who might be kept amongst the curiosities of a cabinet in alcohol; for Rosas liked his negro military. At the same time, the predilection of every one for a glaring red colour—the low houses with their grated windows, and those slender beautiful forms which glide, tightly wrapped in their mantillas, with light and elastic steps through the very centre of dangerous-looking groups of dark-visaged men, with their long knives sticking in their belts—all this often seemed to me as if it were not real, but only a gaily-coloured picture created by the imagination. Recovering from such a trance, I would feel my blood thrill quicker and more briskly

through my veins, if by a lightning thought I aroused myself to the fact that I was really in the very midst of this stirring life, and able to choose my own course of action.

With the kind help of Mr. Graham, who never wearied of doing me a favour when an opportunity occurred, I found an old Spaniard, who had lived a long time in Mendoza, a small place at the very foot of the Cordilleras; and who, though he was ignorant of the present state of the interior, as far as it was infested by the Pampas Indians, informed me that if I could get to Mendoza, there was, even at this advanced season, a chance of my being able to cross the snowy mountains, should I not be overtaken on the way by a snow-storm. The correo (courier) from Chili, he told me, sometimes went over in winter. I might do the same, if I could find a guide, and was determined to brave the worst.

This was all I wanted, and with a lightened heart I commenced my few preparations for the excursion, having learned that in about eight or ten days a correo would start from this place to Mendoza, who most probably would like very much, in the unsettled state of the interior, to have an armed companion. Through an English gentleman, I got acquainted with this old Argentinian, and made a bargain with him by which he was to find fresh horses for me on the road, and pay at

the different stations for my board. The distance was three hundred and nineteen leagues, of not quite three miles, for which I gave him four ounces, in value at that time just sixty-four dollars; and though he had certainly a very fair profit, it is always better to be cheated by one person, than to undergo that process at every station, for cheated the traveller will find himself, manage how he may. But though he found the horses, I had to provide my own saddle and bridle; and I followed the advice of some experienced old stagers—among others my own landlord, who told me always to prefer for such a long ride, an old saddle to a new one, as it was more smooth and pliable, and would ride a great deal better than the best new saddle. It had, moreover, the additional advantage of being cheaper, and I got a tolerably good recado, with bridle, for seven dollars. I bought also a pair of the colossal Argentine spurs for the benefit of the different horses; and furnished with the native revenca—a broad and heavy whip, cut out of a strip of raw leather, with a short handle to it, and an iron ring—I was prepared to set forth.

One difficulty I had yet to overcome, and that was a most serious one—I did not understand the Spanish language; and having only thought of this voyage a few weeks ago, had certainly had no time to study it. What was to become of me, after my first start with the old correo, who, of

course, had not the least idea of any other language in Christendom, I could not imagine; but I thought it worse than useless to make myself uneasy before the time. I had not yet tried what I could do, and there is always a way to make one's self understood, if one only will try.

The correo thought of starting about the 16th or 17th, and I had yet time to look round in the new place I was in. To lose as little as possible of this I accepted with the greatest pleasure an invitation from one of my countrymen, a merchant at Buenos Ayres and Bremen consul, to accompany him to his estancia.

We started on Saturday afternoon to have the whole Sunday before us, and the distance was only about three leagues. The first two leagues we found ourselves, with very little interruption, hemmed in on both sides by hedges and small plantations; and though some places here looked peculiar enough, I felt uncomfortable as long as I saw so many signs of civilisation around me. I wanted to reach the campo, the free Pampas; and got tired of seeing nothing but habitations, fields, and gardens.

Many parts of the road, principally in low muddy places, were paved with sheep's skulls; even some fields were fenced in along the road, frequently for a hundred yards or more, with nothing but cattle skulls—the horns all stuck up with perfect

regularity, to give the whole a finish. Dead cattle, sheep and horses, lay at the same time everywhere on the road—very frequently in the middle of it—impregnating the air with a poisonous stench.—Buenos Ayres!

The horses were not the least alarmed at this litter of carcases. In Europe they would have shied or refused to pass, but here they were so used to the thing that they would leap, with the greatest indifference, right over what might be their dead kindred. Cattle graze close by, where some of their own herd lie rotting, and show not the least concern either for their dead comrades, or their own noses.

Leaving the gardens and fields, we still kept in sight of some low bushes or small plantations of peach, paradise, and other crippled trees; but a few leagues farther on, even these disappeared, and left one wide unbroken ocean-like plain, affording pasture to innumerable heads of cattle, and the scene of many a bloody battle fought to free and to subdue a people.

After a couple of hours' easy gallop we reached the place of our destination, and I found myself, for the first time, at a real estancia on the campo of the Plate river.

These estancias, as they are called—farm would not express the real meaning of the word—are only in some cases plantations, and in the interior,

most of them serve but to give the cattle-holders and their peons or servants a shelter. The peons frequently have hardly that, but live in enclosures used to pen their herds. Often country-people do not even try to raise vegetables for their own use. Meat is their chief nourishment, and the Argentinian may be said to eat meat with meat.

What the cocoa-palm is to the South Sea Islander, his herds are, in most respects, to the guacho. The hides he uses in divers ways—as a thatch for his hut and a coverlet for his bed, for his corn-crib and ropes, his saddle and bridle, his boots and sacks. The meat is nearly his only nourishment, and even with the dung and bones he kindles his fire and cooks his meals.

But here the difference between a country whose inhabitants live on vegetables, and one where meat forms the main, and often only food, becomes evident. These estancias are entirely wanting in the homely, quiet, and pleasing outlines of a farm, and the cleanly cheerful life, whose main stock of provisions is vegetables, is missing here; while on every side death and putrefaction betray the rough trade of the cattle-breeder.

Wherever the eye ranges, round the dwellings of these estancia holders, it meets or marks the traces of butchered or fallen animals. In every direction you see stretched hides, piled-up intestines, skulls, horns, hoofs, bones, and pools or

signs of blood. Thousands and thousands of buzzards, hawks, and sea-gulls flap their wings over these places, or stand over-gorged, too lazy to fly, on some old skeletons in the neighbourhood. A stranger's nose has really first to get used to the disgusting fresh scent of meat and blood, let alone putrefaction.

Even the elsewhere peaceful and herbivorous domestic animals, change their nature and accommodate themselves to unavoidable circumstances. Chickens, geese, and turkeys, live entirely upon meat, and hogs are fattened upon it. Can it be wondered at, that the inhabitants of this country, continually butchering, and for ever surrounded by death and blood, become themselves wild and blood-thirsty, and learn to think, only too often, no more of a human life than that of a calf or a horse.

An immense quantity of wild water-fowl enlivens the small creeks and ponds and lakes on the wide plains. Wild ducks and geese, swans, cranes and flamingos, fly about in swarms, or float on the shallow and unwholesome waters.

We only went out once with our guns, and then, although, in fact, it was more to see the game than for sport, I found my most extravagant expectations surpassed. In about half a day, which we spent on the margin of a little river, and a pond—I cannot call it a lake—we saw

several flocks of geese and swans, at least twenty different species of ducks and many diving-birds, two kinds of flamingos, one of a soft rose colour, which looked most beautiful in rising, and the other of a darker red and black, but both of them very shy. Innumerable plovers were scattered about everywhere, and as nobody kills them, showed themselves so tame and impudent, that they kept flying and screaming around us, wherever we went, and very frequently frightened the game away. Water, or swamp-snipes, a kind of wood-cock, appeared in flocks of eighty and ninety, as did also a large strand-snipe, a kind of water-turkey, as large as a common turkey, but not eatable. Besides these, there was a bird not unlike a grouse, and a quantity of cranes, storks and gulls.

When we went home in the evening, the air was perfectly alive with ducks and geese, flying in regular triangles to their nightly resting-places. I noticed a small quadruped, about the size of a large cat, but more heavy and clumsy, and belonging to the badger family, sitting before tolerably large and deep holes, and watching our movements. If we passed quietly by, they would remain stationary, but on the least motion towards them, they disappeared like lightning in their holes.

We shot one, just to have a fair look at the creature, and found it a little animal between the badger and the hamster, something larger than the

American ground-hog. The skin of this little animal, I was told, is tolerably good, and even the meat is eatable, but nobody molests them. The guachos have meat enough in their cattle, and they do not require, in this warm climate, the fur, and as the skins are not yet marketable, they have no inducement to kill these innocent creatures.

A peculiar kind of otter is found in great numbers in the water-courses, but Rosas prohibited their being hunted, as the skins, which are of some value, were reserved as a prize for his soldiers. The avestrus, or South American ostrich, is similarly reserved, and slaughter is punishable with a heavy penalty.

I was very careful to learn as much as I could of the character of the laws, and found here an admirable opportunity, the overseer of this plantation being a very intelligent German, who could give me every information I wanted.

What he said at first of Rosas, sounded much better than I had expected, and I found it confirmed afterwards wherever I went. That Rosas was a tyrant, nobody could well deny. He ruled the land with an iron hand: when he overthrew his enemies, and gained the ascendancy, blood had run in perfect streams; but it wanted such a man as Rosas to keep this unruly population, always ready to use the deadly knife, in peace and order. At the same time he protected foreigners and

foreign handicrafts, for he felt that it needed their example, with his only half-civilized hordes, to make the people till the ground, and become after a while peaceful citizens.

The form of government has since been altered. Rosas has become a fugitive in Europe, and another president rules the Plata States. The new government has one great advantage, in not having commenced with a deluge of blood, or such atrocities as Rosas perpetrated, to satiate his vengeance and cow down his enemies. I hope it may be also able to keep in force his beneficial laws, which protect the lives and property of citizens and foreigners, and in that case, the Argentine republic bids fair to become one of the most flourishing countries in South America.

The climate is salubrious. Sickness, it is true, appears here and there, but it is never malignant, and the soil is—unlike the prairies of North America, where the best land is never found—most excellent, producing even with very little culture, first rate crops.

The export produce consists as yet only of hides, dried beef, tallow, wool, &c. Cattle and sheep, indeed, furnish the only produce for market, but what a quantity of this the Pampas raise, the reader may imagine, from the Buenos Ayres prices, namely, a fattened bullock of two years and a half, ten shillings; one three years old, eleven shil-

lings; a cow, from ten to twelve shillings; a tame milch-cow with calf, up to twenty shillings.

This is the price by the single head, but buying a herd together, as a new settler always does, cattle cost, on an average, from three to four shillings a head. Buyer and seller ride out, and drive up a certain number of cattle. In counting at the above-named price of from three to four shillings a head, calves are always given in.

A good broken-in horse commonly costs twenty, or twenty-two shillings; an unbroken gelding, half that sum. Of stallions, you may buy as many as you wish, at four shillings a head, and mares are even cheaper, but mares are never ridden.

The most serious expense are the sheep. What are called the fine merino-sheep fetch as much as six dollars, or twenty-four shillings a head, but sheep-farmers here consider this an exorbitant charge, and the average price for good common sheep is only one shilling and sixpence; and if you buy the quite common kind, and in a lot, you pay from one and a half to two pesos—a pesos is not quite three-pence—the head. A dozen sheep-skins can be bought for six or eight shillings, the skins being dearer than the whole sheep. Hogs are the dearest animals in the country, and a good hog brings from one to two pounds.

The price of land has risen during the last ten

years, but it is yet so cheap as not to require a very large capital in the settler. Land is measured by varas—a vara being something less than a yard—and government sells it in sections of one legua and a half, (a legua being six thousand varas), and each vara costs from four to seven shillings. But the closer the land is to a town or city, the greater, of course, is its value.

Wheat, though I saw little of it raised in the neighbourhood of Buenos Ayres, is cheap, as are all kinds of vegetables. They had just gathered, in June, the second harvest of potatoes; and there is no doubt, a poor man can commence here with a very small capital, and be pretty certain to secure, by moderate industry, a good subsistence.

On the Monday morning we returned to town, but I must not omit to mention a singular tree—or rather the singular tree they have here, for I saw no other—except some little stunted acacias. It is called the ombu, and is indeed a splendid tree for shade, and in form is the most fantastic I have ever seen. This tree, when young, has a trunk like other trees, running straight up from the ground to a height of eight or ten feet, but when old it becomes withered, and loses both root and branches. This is, after all, a very wise arrangement, for the wide-spreading branches of the wet and spongy wood, could never be able to support themselves, and indeed require to be sustained by props

from the roots, which spring up to meet them, but, unlike the banana of India, do not again fall to the ground, but twine themselves round the stem, and form caves and columns, reaching out from the tree on every side. The wood is entirely useless, and will not even burn, unless it has been previously well-dried by the sun, but the leaves are a beautiful green, and the tree presents a fine appearance.

I had a very interesting interview, or rather audience, at the governor's house, with Donna Manuelita, the lovely daughter of the famous guacho chief.

It was desirable to hear, from the governor himself, how far he would interest himself in German immigration, and if he would really be willing to grant any advantages to poor, but industrious German farmers, who landed in his territories, or only leave them to themselves; but Rosas never received strangers, not even the consuls of the different states, the American consul being the only exception. Whatever they wished to say must be brought before his daughter—the prime minister of state—and to her I also had been referred. But here another difficulty arose. On leaving my ship, knowing what kind of road I had to traverse, I had not encumbered myself with any superfluous wardrobe, and a grey woollen hunting-shirt, with my water-boots, and broad-brimmed

hat, was the gayest attire I could assume for the presence-chamber. Mr. Graham, with whom I conferred on this subject, only laughed, and told me that would not make the least difference. Donna Manuelita, was too sensible and discreet a lady to care much about my appearance, and he would undertake to introduce me to her himself.

One evening, therefore, to the astonishment of the sentinel at the governor's palace, he presented me to Donna Manuelita, who was attended by some grandees of the Argentine court, and some lovely young ladies, one of whom spoke English very fluently, and another even a little German. In spite of my dress, which was more suitable to the Pampas than to a court, I passed a very pleasant hour.

The interior of the governor's house—so far as I could observe it—was simple, but very tastefully furnished in the European style, though the lofty and spacious rooms were suited to the warmer climate.

CHAPTER V.

THE SALADEROS.

I HEARD so much during my residence in Buenos Ayres, of the saladeros, or butchering places of this city, that I very naturally wished to see them; and one of my countrymen, a young merchant, undertook to be my cicerone. One fine morning, before breakfast—I wish we had waited till after—we took horse and galloped to a boca, or little creek, about three miles distant, where these saladeros lay.

Having followed nearly all the way the windings of the Plata river, I had contracted a faint presentiment of what we should behold, from a perfect mass of dead cattle and horses, which had been washed ashore by the stream, and lay undisturbed in the middle of the road, to be consumed by birds of prey, or by time. At one point in particular, where the high shore jutted out very steeply, and only a small road, or path, had been left, lay

three horses together, over which we had to pass. The stench was stifling, but our horses did not mind it a bit, and jumped over their fallen comrades without the least hesitation.

After a ride of about fifteen minutes, we arrived in sight of the boca. I thought at first the banks of the little watercourse looked remarkably chalky, but as we neared the place I was astonished to see that the whole bank consisted of nothing else but cattle-skulls, which were walled up, with the horns sticking regularly out like spikes. But we had no time to linger on these relics of mortality; our road lay over the little bridge—a toll-bridge, by the bye—and a few minutes afterwards we found ourselves between the low buildings and sheds of the saladeros.

At the shed we first visited, they did not, as they said, kill that day, but were busy salting down the hides, to get them ready for shipment. The place was cleared up, and looked passably clean; but galloping only a few hundred yards further, we heard the screams and yells of the drivers, and as we neared the place, saw three horsemen ride into a wide corral or enclosure, where a couple of hundred head of cattle were collected, and who tried to separate a part of them from the rest.

One of the horsemen was a most conspicuous figure—an old tall bony fellow, some fifty-six or

sixty years old, with long-iron grey locks, tough and sunburnt, and with a physiognomy as plain and readable as heart could wish. If ever there existed a bloody murderous villain in these States, where people grow up in blood and murder, this was the man. Such have been the butchers sent by Rosas, with his orders of death into the very houses of his enemies, to cut their throats wherever they found them, even should it be at table, with wives and children around them. This man seemed to be the leader of the rest, and was undoubtedly a dexterous hand at this bloody trade.

A red poncho, with dark blue stripes, hung round his shoulders, and he wore a cheripaw of the same colour, with a red kerchief round his head, and botas taken from the feet of a horse, which looked almost as red as his other garments, showing how busy he had been that morning at his handicraft. The lasso was fastened on the back of his saddle—for what would a guacho be without a lasso? and in galloping along, the out-flying poncho sometimes afforded a glimpse of a long ivory-handled and blood-stained knife, stuck in a belt behind his back, the handle towards his right hand. A shaggy grey beard waved about his chin, while he was continually chewing one of his long moustachios, and similar bunches of grey hair hung down over his eyes, now glaring with a wild and burning fire. I could not remove my eye from

this old grey guacho, and his every movement only rivetted it more.

Three of the corrals were close together—one very large one, into which the cattle were driven as soon as they came in; the second, about half as large, designed to hold a part of them, so that the drivers need not always run among the crowd, and frighten the animals more than necessary; and the third and smallest, which would hold only forty or fifty head, forming the killing place. In the second were about thirty head standing apart from the first lot, and then three horsemen galloped in amongst these, and drove them with deafening cries into the smallest corral. At first the poor animals ran forward, seeing a place open for them, which might lead to liberty; but as soon as they scented the fresh blood, they pressed back, though too late, their executioners being already upon them, pushing some forward by the weight of their horses, and frightening others by swinging their arms round, as if they were about to throw the dreaded lasso. Bewildered and half-deafened by the unearthly screams of their pursuers, alarmed by the scent of blood and the mass of strange faces and shapes around the corral, they advanced slowly, step by step, till only a few paces from the bars, which were to close upon them, when some of the poor creatures stood hesitating and trembling, as if insensible of the yells and blows which urged them onward.

This incensed the terrible old guacho, who turned his revenca, and struck the heavy iron ring down on the hip-bones of the poor bellowing beasts, then dropping his revenca, which swung on a thin cord to his wrist, and plucking his knife from its scabbard, ran it, not to injure the hide, with a dreadful curse, between the hams of one unhappy animal. The rascal would have run his knife, I believe, with the same delight into a human heart. But this cruel act accomplished, the last of the herd entered the corral; the bars closed behind them, and two minutes afterwards the slaughter begun.

The old guacho left the corral with his two followers, and all of them stationed themselves outside, where they fastened a very strong rawhide rope to the saddle-girts of their horses, and then waited the signal for further proceedings.

The leathern rope was a long and very strong lasso, turned with a running noose over a block, which a man held in his hand. He was standing on a kind of scaffold, right above the fence, and opposite to where the cattle had entered the corral. As soon as he received the word, the man with the lasso swung it twice or three times round his head, and threw the noose with unerring precision round the horns of one of the animals. The three horsemen saw the noose flying, and perfectly satisfied that it had taken effect, they spurred forward, and dragged the ensnared heifer down on her

knees and over her side; and so before she could gain her feet, or offer, in fact, the least resistance, brought her to the place where the lasso-thrower stood, when the latter, bending down, passed his long glittering knife with indescribable dexterity through her neck, close behind the horns. Then, without turning a look on his victim, he took the noose from the horns, while the horsemen came galloping back to slack the lasso; and raising himself up to his old posture, opened a kind of tray in the corral, and the whole frame on which the heifer had been pulled down, glided away out with the bleeding animal upon it. It was then slid down a short railroad to an open shed, where half-a-dozen bloody hands, with naked arms and legs, and long knives, were waiting to strip off the hide, and cut up the different parts of the body.

A strong push drove the frame back to its old place, and the next moment the noose was thrown over another pair of horns, and the same performance was begun anew. Backwards and forwards ran the little frame, the lasso whirled, and the poor animals bellowed more and more dismally, betraying at each execution the greatest agitation and dread. With every sign of terror in their eyes, and bristling hair, they tried to escape the inevitable noose, but in vain—another and another fell, and once even two were caught together, without making the least alteration in the arrangements

for slaughter; and half an hour afterwards the three horsemen trotted back to the largest corral, to drive in another lot.

We now proceeded to view the slaughter-house itself; but I could not linger here, and turned away sickened. The place was certainly kept as clean as possible, but it could not prevent my heart and soul recoiling from such a scene. The blood ran in perfect streams through wooden and open gutters towards the boca, and several men were stationed to keep these channels free from clots. The shed was high and roomy; and the railroad on which the slain animals were brought down, passed through it from one end to the other. Men were busy cutting open an heifer, while others stripped the hide from the reeking carcase, and the body itself disappeared under their sharp knives and dexterous hands. And what a spectacle were these men! with their naked feet wading in blood, and their whole persons covered with it; while everywhere around were strewn the heads, and feet, and tongues of the slaughtered animals. In another corner men were loading waggons with intestines; and here I saw a whole pile, thirty or forty pieces, of unborn calves; and boys, working up to their shoulders in blood, were engaged skinning the largest, and dragging the rest by the hind legs to some carts, which stood waiting to receive them.

One fellow in a short red poncho—I shall never forget him as long as I live—kept crawling round this sickening heap, till he seized one palpitating mass by the hind leg, pulled from under his poncho an old blood-stained bag, dropped his prize into it, and gliding off without anybody observing his proceedings, disappeared from the shed. From this charnel heap he had picked out his breakfast! My blood curdled at the thought. I could endure such scenes no longer, and I hastened away. Our horses were only a few yards distant, but they stood as quiet as if they had been grazing on the open plain—they were used to it.

In a few minutes we were at full speed on our way home, and reached town in time for breakfast; but it was three days before I could again touch a piece of meat—I could not bear to look at it.

CHAPTER VI.

TO HORSE.

THE few days I was yet to remain at Buenos Ayres, I spent in walking about the town, seeing and hearing as much as possible. In the afternoon I usually rode out, partly to have a better opportunity of seeing the neighbourhood, partly to accustom myself to the saddle; for though I could sit a horse very well, I was not quite sure how I could stand a ride, nearly all the way at full speed, of three hundred and nineteen leagues, at one stretch.

Horses are very cheap at Buenos Ayres, and one can very well hire a horse for a dollar a day; but the report spread by captains of merchantmen, that horses are so cheap here, that they are perfectly satisfied at a livery-stable if you only bring back the saddle, and will not ask a higher price for the horse than the common hire of it, is, I need hardly say, a fable. Sea-captains

are, in fact, the only persons who can ever play this trick, as the proprietors of livery-stables at Buenos Ayres—nearly all of whom are Englishmen—know seamen as far as they can see them, and are aware how they treat horses, whenever they get "on board" of one; therefore they take very good care to let them have such animals only as they cannot spoil—the oldest and worst in the stable—and consequently it is always an accident if they do come back. For such animals even a dealer in horseflesh has not the heart to ask a price, and they let off the delinquents, as the captains aver, if they only bring back the saddle; while the poor devil of a rider, who had hoped to enjoy an afternoon's quiet ride, thinks himself very well off, only to have been obliged to carry home his saddle for a distance of five or six miles on his own back, instead of the horse's.

On the 17th of June, two boys came to me from the old correo, leading a horse, to take me to his house, whence he intended to make an early start.

At home, Mr. Davies, my landlord—or rather my landlady's husband, for he was in the wool trade, and hardly ever at home—had in the meantime taken the greatest pains to persuade me not to risk the trip, at least not to do it for the sake of settling in California; and I could never con-

vince him that I was not travelling *to*, but *through* California. "Stay away from the accursed country," he used to say; "I have got a particular friend there, hem,"—he put in the hem sometimes in the drollest way imaginable—"and he knows all about it, hem." He then told me some very dreadful tales about the mines, the fevers there, the murders and robberies, and a hundred other pleasant incidents, which might encourage a traveller, and finished this glowing account of the gold country nearly always with the words: "And to get to this wretched country as quick as possible, hem! you want to have your throat cut first from ear to ear, hem? and then be stuck up in the snow, and let the temporales have a blow at you, hem?"

Poor Mr. Davies, all his reasonings were in vain; and as I shook hands with him at parting, he hoped to see an account in the papers that the Pampas had not eaten me, at least without pepper and salt.

Reaching the house of the old correo, I was rather astonished to see the old fellow, whom I had expected to find packing and saddling his horses, sitting very quietly and unconcerned in a chair, sucking his maté; while the whole room was strewn over with packets, packs, and blankets. His old lady was squatting in a corner, blowing a rather sickly coal-fire, to keep the water boiling

for that eternal beverage; and his son leant back on a mattress, which seemed to serve at once as a sofa and bed, and played some Spanish dances, with a really skilful hand, on the guitar.

As I entered the room, the lady rose and offered me a small gourd, with a thin metal tube sticking in it, and containing fluid boiling hot. I knew from the description given to me by some friends, that this was the famous maté, and put the tube, without grumbling, between my lips; but bless my soul, how quickly I drew it out again! I believe it was red-hot, and the skin of my lips stuck to the pipe; but the lady smiled, and the old correo laughed outright, for they thought me a great greenhorn. Not able to drink their maté! how then could I stand a ride through the Pampas?

Seeing the bad impression I had made, I put the tube once more into my mouth, like a good boy, and at it I went. The tears rose in my eyes, and I considered myself a martyr in a small way, but I did not dare to wink any more.

The maté is the most favourite drink in the Argentine republic, and perhaps the reader may be well satisfied to hear a few words about it, if he has not to drink it. Maté itself is principally raised in the Brazils and Paraguay, and is gathered from a tree. It looks like a very fine green powder, with little pieces of stalk in it.

This stuff is put in a small gourd about as large as an apple, which is filled up with boiling water. But since the fine dust-like powder, made into tea, would be too disagreeable to drink, a tube or bombilla, as it is called, with a little hollow and pierced ball at one end, is introduced into the gourd, and the ball sinking into the maté, holds back the powder, and only the liquid is sucked through. But the difficulty with a stranger lies in the metal, which immediately imbibes the heat of the water, and burns the lips of those who are not used to scorching. The natives draw away at this tube continually; but at first it is to a stranger not only a painful, but even a disgusting act, for neither gourd nor bombilla are ever changed, and go from mouth to mouth through the whole company. Nor can you venture to decline the compliment—for such it is deemed—or you would offend the whole company, and particularly the host and hostess. I knew my fate from the first, and sat there sucking the sweet burning stuff, with a resignation worthy of a better cause.

While we were drinking, a couple of young fellows came in, and began to carry out the packs that strewed the floor. The correo followed soon after, leaving me alone with the old lady and the guitar player. The old lady immediately made an attack on the little Spanish I

knew, and wanted to learn all about my family and home, circumstances and interests. But I was very reserved, and at last she had to give up the inquest in despair, though not till her husband came suddenly back into the room, and buckling on his large spurs, and picking up a short-handled, long and strong whip, called to horse. In a few minutes he was ready, and took a short but kind leave of his wife, while the young fellow laid down his guitar to shake hands with him, and we sallied forth.

The horses were outside—four fine, strong, lively animals—one loaded with all the packs and packets I had seen in the room, another with a large portmanteau, and the remaining two destined to carry ourselves. My saddle-bags were quickly fastened, my blanket and poncho tied behind, and the next minute found us trotting slowly through the crowded streets—for people are not allowed to gallop in town—till we reached the outskirts, when, clapping spurs to his horse, the old fellow gave the whip to the pack-horse, which a young guacho—our postilion, who rode himself the horse with the portmanteau—held by a line, nodded to me, and away we went at a speed which I thought at that time would inevitably knock up the pack-horse in a quarter of an hour. But little did I know of South American horses!

My old correo was a fine specimen of a guacho, though dressed more in the European style. He wore a black broad-brimmed hat, like my own, but of a coarser and more durable stuff, a large dark-blue poncho, lined with red, and instead of being simply slit open in the middle, it was furnished with a cloak-like cape and button. His other garments consisted of a tight pair of unmentionables, and long tan-coloured riding-boots, to which were buckled the heavy iron spurs. Round his neck he wore a red kerchief, and he grasped in his hand the long whip already mentioned, provided, as it seemed, exclusively for the benefit of the pack-horse.

The spurs of the guachos hang down under their heels, so that they can hardly walk with them, and have to step always on tiptoe. On foot, indeed, these guachos are very inferior beings, reminding one of a seal ashore; and the spurs with their holding-wheels, three and four inches in diameter, rattle and jingle behind them incessantly; but let them touch the back of their horses, and they are changed as by a magic rod. At first stooping over and walking as if between eggs, the guacho suddenly draws himself up, the downcast look becomes confident, even haughty, and once in the saddle, on the back of his prancing steed, horse and rider seem one being, made of fire and life. After

a short time amongst them, I found also the advantage of draggling the spurs. The guacho, of course, never thinks of cleaning or currying his horse, and consequently the animal, particularly in wet weather, is perfectly encrusted with mud, which a common European spur would never pierce. The spurs therefore must have long and sharp points, and as these, if stuck out straight behind, could not but be very inconvenient and even dangerous to the rider, when riding a wild and unbroken horse, they are fastened in such a way that he may press his heels as closely as he pleases to the belly of the rearing animal, without using the spur, which, however, a sligh turn of the foot will bring into immediate operation.

My attention was soon called to the surrounding country, and to the wild figures we met on the road, and who galloped madly past, their ponchos and kerchiefs streaming behind. The correo knew them all, having for more than forty years traversed the same route, and, as we proceeded, there was not a hut from which he had not a friendly word. Being in the great thoroughfare to the city, the main entrance from the interior, we passed numbers of mules and waggons, bringing produce to town. And the landscape itself, with the singular aloe and cactus hedges, the low houses, the garden walls of sheep's-heads, the heavy carts drawn by

lazy oxen, and with a lazier driver sitting on the shaft, pricking the patient animals with a short-pointed stick; the expansive plain, with its widely-ranging swellings of low undulating land, and numerous herds, scattered over the green turf, formed altogether a scene of extraordinary interest.

But the correo had no eye for the scenery, and my sprightly horse required no little attention; so away we galloped, our horses a little scared sometimes by the buzzard and half-wild dogs, feasting on some mouldering carcase of horse or heifer, which we scented at a distance on the poisoned air, and from which they were startled by our approach. Then the road becomes more open; the sharp whip descends with a smack on the hips of the poor pack-horse, the postilion strikes with his revenca, and away we go at full speed over the plain.

CHAPTER VII.

A RIDE ACROSS THE PAMPAS.

Our first station was Al Puente de Marquez, a high-sounding name, appropriated by a miserable hut, at which we changed horses, and took some dinner—a dish of meat and another of pumpkin, maté being of course the vanguard of the whole. I knew immediately that my blistered lips would not be healed till I reached Mendoza.

This was the first guacho hut I had entered, and though I thought at the time that it was a wretched hovel, the walls being of mud, and covered with reeds, I found afterwards that it deserved to be considered a palace, furnished even with taste and luxury. In fact, it contained a table, and several chairs, with seats made of stretched hide, and we were even supplied with a table-cloth, though it was rather the worse for several weeks' use, and forks—every one of course is expected to carry his own knife. These were articles I then

thought by no means superfluous. At dinner we all ate the meat out of one large dish, standing in the middle of the table. Several children dined with us, and one who sat next me, a rosy-faced, dark-eyed friendly little fellow—with long silken fringes to his eyes, and beautiful curly brown hair, would really have interested me, if he had not kept his long spoon so active, and so very close under his nose.

Dinner did not last long. Fresh horses were brought, and in an incredibly short time, packed and saddled, and away we went towards the next station, where we intended to stop all night.

The correo is the regular and only post that goes from Buenos Ayres to the interior, and keeps up tolerably regular communication with Chili, San Jago, and Valparaiso. The correo from San Jago brings the mail across the Cordilleras, in summer at stated times, and in winter whenever the snow permits; and at Mendoza he meets the correo from Buenos Ayres, with whom he exchanges mails. The post starts every month from Buenos Ayres, and two correos proceed with it alternately.

The house at which we were to pass the night, was six leagues farther on, and was called the Cañada de Escobar. It was as dirty as the previous one, the denizens were as squalid, and the maté-tubes as hot. At the same time the hut lay dull and lonesome in the wide and open plain, no field, no

garden at hand, not even an enclosure for horses or cattle, only a few posts, the rough trunks of some willow-trees, were driven into the ground round the hovel, and encircled a space of about twenty paces in diameter.

I can stand a great deal of discomfort, and never complain of a hard bed or a frugal meal, but the abominable filth which I met everywhere here, the dirty spoons, and forks and dishes, and, above all, the slatternly habits and squalor of the women, spoiled my appetite at the outset of my journey. I had not yet got used to it—and I hoped that I never should—but I did not then know the worst.

The next morning I was, however, compensated for all my sufferings, real and imaginary. The air was fresh and bracing; the clear blue sky stretched pleasantly over the verdant plain, and the sight of peaceful herds, grazing everywhere on the soft and luxuriant turf, made me forget all the miseries of the hut—fleas included. Our horses were soon ready, and away we went, scampering over the plain, while on every side we beheld troops of wild horses, playing and chasing each other in the sunny light, and continually came on solitary little ponds, teeming with wild ducks and surrounded by plovers, storks and cranes.

High overhead flew long chains of wild geese and swans, and on the ground large and comfort-

able-looking water-turkeys strutted about, or broke through the low reeds on the margin of the ponds, and cackled to each other incessantly. Little screech-owls sat before their holes, easily distinguished by the heap of yellow earth thrown up around. On the rich clover and grass reposed herds of well-fed cattle, or young lambs frisked round their bleating mothers; and wild steeds neighing aloud, were answered by our panting horses, as they threw back their manes, and snuffed the pure and balmy air.

That night I was as hungry as a wolf, having had nothing to eat for four-and-twenty hours, but my landlady did not seem any advance on her precursors. The meat was served up in an old wooden bowl, which had not seen warm water or a dish-cloth for at least a fortnight. I thought to have an alleviation of the fare in one thing, and was resolved to make some honest green tea, instead of the stuff they call maté. Boiling water being procured, tea was soon made, and I was just preparing to enjoy it in the usual and natural way, when, bless me! such an uproar arose in the hut: "He's going to drink it," cried the hostess, slapping her hands together in astonishment. Of course I was, but up started the old man—and how the knave grinned as he did so!—and presented me with a bombilla—the same that the old hag had used five minutes before for sucking her maté—and I actually had to take my tea through this

horrible blow-pipe, for every time I tried to get rid of it, and to drink my tea in a Christian-like manner, I raised such a storm of derision, that at last I gave up the point in despair.

At this place I first saw an Argentine corn-crib, or barn, and a most singular concern it was. Their barns, like everything else, are made of raw hide. An ox is stripped of its hide in such a way as to split only the back, leaving every other part of the hide entire; the feet are then sown up, and after the natural apertures have all been closed, the whole is swung on four posts, about seven feet high, when it is filled with wheat, and the slit above covered by another piece of raw hide, completing the crib.

The third day we reached the small town or village of Arrecifes, on a creek of the same name. Here I found an American, in the service of the republic, who had married a young native lady and lived very comfortable, as he said, in the midst of a population entirely Spanish. We made but a short halt at Arrecifes—just long enough to change horses, and give the correo a chance of getting a supply of aqua-ardiente for his drinking horns, of which he had a couple swinging across his saddle; but I passed a very pleasant half-hour at the house of the American, and felt very sorry to leave him so soon.

In our way onward I saw how cruelly the

Spaniards treat their horses. The stage was a distance of eight leagues, and we accomplished it at full speed; while the correo, whenever the poor broken-down pack-horse wanted only to blow a bit, came mercilessly down upon it with his long whip, though I, for my part, would have willingly given the horses rest. But what could I do? I had to stick to the correo, and could not even spare my own animal.

On we went. Hardly were we in the saddle when the correo cries "Gallop!" cuts the pack-horse over the hips with his long whip, and away we fly across the Pampas. Hold the bridle tight in your hand, dear reader, and look well for your path. Badgers and owls have their holes here at every step, and if you do not help your horse a little with your eyes, you may both kiss the ground. The correo is already a long way in front, you have spared your animal too much. Away with you and take care of the reedy grass ahead; for it covers a swamp. A little more to the left the ground is harder, but it is full of half-concealed holes, and yet must be passed in haste; for the night is fast coming on, and your guide will soon be beyond reach, while path and road no longer exist.

As I came up, the old correo sat his horse stiff and motionless; while his long and heavy poncho, streaming out with every movement, flapped against his shoulders; and only his right arm, as it struck

out with the relentless whip, showed that he had power to move. "On, on!" this was his only thought. The steed that bore him had no hold on his sympathies: it was only a horse; and if it carried its load to the door of the next station, it might lie down and die for all he cared.

I rode myself one of the poorest horses I had yet seen in the Pampas: it stumbled at every other step, and I was continually wondering why we did not both come down together. At last we came to a low soft spot, where the grass was very luxuriant; but the soil, as if elastic, gave way at every tread. My poor horse bore up a good while, till, just as we were coming on drier ground, it came right down on its nose, and pitched me overhead. I was up in a second, and replacing the saddle-bags, the strap of which had been broken by the fall, got in the saddle again, and followed the old correo and postilion, who, I really believe, had not even looked round after me, to see if I was coming. But they were in the right: I was old enough to take care of myself; and setting spurs to my horse, I soon recovered my distance.

It was now getting dark, and we had yet a long way to go. The appearance of the plain began to be very peculiar. As night set in, a damp mist rose from the low ground, to a height of from two to three feet, changing the campo into what seemed a milk-white, shoreless lake, to which the last rays

of the sun, reflected by the clouds above, imparted at intervals a soft rosy radiance.

I had now lost sight of the correo, in fact I had forgotten all about him, and left my horse to choose his own road, just as though I were not traversing a wide and pathless plain, infested by wild tribes, and where, if I lost my leader, I might wander for hundreds and hundreds of miles without regaining the track, and ignorant of the dangers that awaited me. But the scene around was far too interesting to be neglected; and still leaving the bridle to my horse, I hardly knew, or cared whither we went, if I could continue to gaze on this strange and beautiful sight.

The most extraordinary objects in this floating sea of mist were the grazing herds, the upper part of their bodies alone being visible; and the fog gathering in large fleecy masses, began to assume fantastic shapes, such as bergs and figures, which seemed to float on the shining surface of the lake, while lofty dangerous-looking cliffs and glaciers hung above.

It seemed that I was always galloping down the slope of a steep hill, and that the mist would close the next minute over my head, and yet I had not left the open plain, and the sward lay smooth before me. But as night closed in, the mist rose higher and higher, and finally became so thick, that I could hardly see the ground for ten or twelve

yards on either side. But my horse had in the meantime done his best; right ahead I could hear plainly the hoofs of my companions on some hard ground; and in a few minutes I reached a hard-beaten path, and we all arrived together at the hut where we intended to pass the night.

Next morning we started very early—the sun had not even risen above the horizon, and the correo announced as the reason, that we had a long day's march before us. "To-morrow," he added, "we shall come in the range of los Indios—amigo." Los Indios—the long talked-of savages, we were already close to their war-path, and who could say what the two next days might not bring forth. But what matter? Should they come in a small party, we should have to fight; and if they came in a large one, we could but run.

Morning is for the animals of the Pampas the time of repose. Even the hawks and buzzards stand quietly on some low bush or mound, and pay no heed to the little singing-birds flying around; only long-legged storks cackle and chatter, as they walk slowly in couples or small parties on the flat and dry ridges of the ponds. All the little ground-holes are empty; whatever lives down there, does not show its face in the first hours of morning. The herds of cattle lie chewing their cuds on the rich clover of the plains, and

over the horses stand drowsily about, nodding in the cool breeze that rises with the sun.

How different the scene, when the sun is sinking in the west, and the low bushes of the Pampas throw their long shadows over the grass! Troops of horses and cattle are up and feeding, their young ones playing about them, as they move through the plains, only picking the best and sweetest pasture in this rich pantry of the Lord. They tramp and neigh in herds over the greensward, and the soft lowing of the cows mingles with the shrill cry of the hawk, soaring on high, and seeming to have nothing in common with the tribes below.

Hei! how the horses dart with their riders through the plain, the rattling hoofs striking sand and turf far out behind, while they answer the well-known sounds of the steeds running wild over the expanse! Even the caves and ground-holes become alive, though half-an-hour before they seemed empty. How cosily the little bustard sits at his door, keeping his eye on you as you approach! Yonder is another one—there a third, fourth, fifth and sixth. To the right, just under the waving little shrub, a whole family are squatted, delighting in the gambols of the youngest, which has come out this night for the first time, and is quite astounded by all the wonders of the mighty world.

Owls are flying about, and far behind an ewe, with its new-born lamb, anxiously trying the distant flock, bleats and calls to the poor little thing which can yet hardly keep its feet, and which she cannot leave behind. Already a powerful vulture, which has been circling about the place for some time, is watching the lamb and the mother, to find her one minute only off her guard, and tired of waiting, darts down at last for his prey. But the week timid ewe has suddenly changed her nature, and with bended head and sparkling eye, has become the assailant, but only advances a few steps, knowing full well that the safety of her young one depends on her presence. The vulture is taken aback by the unlooked-for courage of the dam, and too cowardly to attack, but too greedy to give up, follows at a little distance, keeping his large round eyes on the tottering lamb, while the poor ewe, now pushing and now coaxing, strives to get it quicker along, out of the reach of the dreaded enemy.

An armadillo glides through the waving grass, and the young postilion raises himself high in his saddle to watch its course, and see if the bended halms will not again betray its presence.

And what is lying there in a pool of water, where a small sinking in the ground stayed the water from the last rain? It is a dying cow, the green glassy eye growing blind as it stares on the

full and luxurious clover that presses softly against her side, in a few days to be infected by her decaying carcass, and trampled under foot by beasts of prey. And here, and everywhere, lie the skeletons of others, some yet covered with the old dry hide, others grown over with fresher and more luxuriant clover.

Then comes our old friend the stork. How watchful and motionless does he now stand in the small pond, peering into the clear water. He never even looks up at the screaming flight of parrots, which shoot with rapid wing over the plain to seek their nightly resting-place, nor the large troop of fiery-red flamingos, that have taken possession of a neighbouring pond. Only one angry look does he throw over at a large flock of restless, cackling ducks, which dart down in wild and noisy flight into the pond, ruffling the water where it stands. Then again it is watchful as before, staring into the dark and shining tide, to see what supper it will furnish.

On we go. The sun has sunk long ago behind the Cordilleras, and night throws her veil over the slumbering earth.

That night we were camped in a small hovel, made of twigs stuck in the ground, and bent together above. The whole furniture of the house consisted of two horse-skulls for chairs, and a couple of ox-hides thrown carelessly on the

ground. In the middle of the hut was a fire of bones and cow-dung, and from this rose a perfect steam of stench. Here some meat was prepared for our supper, and a most delicious flavour it had, broiled, without even a stick between, on that fire.

But all is nothing when you are used to it, and after an old guacho had gnawed one of the bones awhile, he handed it to me, and I picked it clean. I had eaten hardly anything for twenty-four hours, and having travelled about eighty-four miles, was above trifles.

On the 21st, we reached the province of Santa-Fé, and in crossing the little river Arroyo de Pavon, were in the direct track of the feared Indians. Five or six houses were standing together on the bank of the creek, and here we heard the first account of the Indians worth noticing. They had shown themselves in the neighbourhood in troops of fifty or sixty; all well armed, and most excellently mounted, sometimes even with led horses. They had also had a skirmish with the soldiers, attacked several huts in the campo, and killed the inhabitants.

The men here spoke of nothing but los Indios, and had even sent their young women away to sheltered towns in the interior, while the men were ready to defend their homes or fly, as the horde should be small or great. Flying herds, with which the natives came galloping up,

and startled game, were the most certain signs of the approach of the enemy; and flight towards the north—where the Cordoba range had hitherto proved a barrier against these wild tribes—was thought the surest, and in fact the only way to escape.

The Arroyo de Pavon seemed also in many respects a boundary of the country. From this point, the guachos no longer took the paper money of Buenos Ayres. Paper dollars or pesos, worth threepence a-piece, and even the scenerie, changed in value. Hitherto the land had been one wide, uninterrupted beautiful green plain, covered with juicy clover, and fresh luxuriant grass, upon which the well-fed cattle grazed in innumerable herds and flocks; but from here, as if cut off by the bank of the river, the country took a more wintry aspect: the grass disappeared, and gave way to a grey furze, which throwing itself in broken masses like a veil over the sward, left here and there indeed beautiful green spots free, but only gathered more strength the farther we advanced into the interior, till it swallowed up the green altogether.

We rode that night till nearly ten o'clock, several hours after it had become perfectly dark, in order to cover as much of this country as we could, for the correo was, in fact, far from being at his ease; and every hut we passed, he inquired for news of

the red men. We crossed that night a small river with very muddy banks, where I nearly sank with my horse in the soft mud; and when at last we reached the hut where we were to lodge, it was too late to procure a bit to eat, although we had not broken our fast the whole day. But next morning we had time enough to eat and rest; a very heavy mist lay on the plain, and the correo and the inmates of the hut had a long talk together about the danger of starting in such a fog and being run upon by the Indians, who like to sneak about at such a time. Besides this, we had hardly any path to follow, and the old fellow was afraid of losing himself.

At last, a light air sprang up, and the mist, breaking into loose, rolling masses, drifted off towards the north, affording us once more a full view of the country. The correo was on the watch, and scanning the southern horizon, looked narrowly at the various herds of cattle, to mark if they showed any symptom of fear. In this reconnaissance I assisted him, having with me a most excellent pocket-telescope, made by one of our best opticians. Everything seemed in perfect order, and the horses were brought out and quickly made ready to start.

As we proceeded, we saw but few cattle, the guachos having driven their herds as far as they could out of reach of the Indians. The plain,

however, abounded with deer. Frequently we started an old buck from a clump of furze, and the beautiful high-crested animals, looking, with their long white tails, exactly like the stags of Virginia, flew off with long bounds over the wide flat, never once stopping till they got out of hearing of the horses. I was at first astonished to find them so wild, the guachos having no guns; but in truth the deer perhaps dreaded more their lassos and bolas and fleet horses, which rarely fail of insuring sport.

Galloping thus for a couple of hours, I forgot all about the Indians; but all at once I saw ahead of us, and right in our path, about half-a-mile distant, a party of the most singular-looking beings I had ever beheld, coming over the rise of a low, undulating swell of the land. That they were not men, I saw at a glance; but it was equally clear that they were not quadrupeds; and yet, as I looked again they seemed as if they were really long-legged naked men, running with a load upon their backs over the plains. The correo smiled as he saw how narrowly I watched these strange objects, and told me they were ostriches.

Ostriches!—the first I had ever beheld in a wild state,—ostriches which chased one another over the wide Pampas, striking the air with their short, awkward wings, and throwing their long naked legs to the right and left as if they were sticks hanging under their belly. But their demeanour

quickly changed as soon as they heard the clatter of our horses' hoofs, and in an instant they drew up and stood as if cut out of stone, so still and motionless. Then they flew over the plains as if carried by the pampero, and soon disappeared. Nor is it easy to overtake them when they once take flight; and the guacho, when this is his object, has to come upon them unawares, and can only take them after a long and tedious chase.

I ought to say a few words about the lasso, at least about the bolas, for I suspect my English reader has heard the lasso described often enough. The bolas are small stones from three to four inches in diameter, and each is sewn tightly up in a piece of raw hide, to which is fastened a long strip of the same material, about four or five feet long, and all these three short ropes are tied together at the end. When the bolas is to be thrown, one is taken in the right hand, and the others being swung in a wide circle round the head to give them power and weight, the bolas is impelled forward, very much like the lasso, by a peculiar turn of the wrist, so that when released by the hand, the three bolas or balls spread out to a triangle, and fly whirling through the air till one of them finds, in the object aimed at, resistance, and is stopped, when the other two, striking round with the same force, entangle and throw down, and sometimes even kill the destined victim, whether man or beast.

I have seen horses brought down by these bolas as if they had been struck by lightning, and the force with which they come is sufficient to break a horse or bull's leg.

The bolas form, with a lance fourteen feet in length, the principal weapons of the Indians; and they possess great dexterity in using them, as well as the lance, which they carry, galloping up to the enemy, in an up-and-down swinging motion, till they strike at the mark. It is made out of a kind of bamboo or cane, and is furnished with an iron point. The correo told me it was all but impossible to avert a blow from such a lance, on account of the swinging of the point; and the Pampas themselves have such skill in the use of this weapon, that passing by at full speed, they will strike a dollar without ever missing.

The guachos are, in all these exercises, hardly inferior to the aborigines. Half-Indians themselves, they throw lassos and bolas with the same dexterity; and it is a splendid sight to see those wild, savage men on their panting steeds, their ponchos streaming out behind, the wide noose of the lasso whirling round their heads, and man and horse as if one being, following, with maddening speed, the dashing, flying herds, while the birds of prey circle overhead; the green plain, the blue sky, the picturesque groups of pursuers and pursued, changing with every minute; all this leaves an impression

on the mind of the spectator which it would be difficult to describe and impossible to forget. Such a spectacle to be properly comprehended must be seen, felt: your blood must tingle in your veins, your own steed have danced under you with inflated nostrils and uttering wild neighs, and then it may be conceived and understood.

On the 23rd we reached the little town of Cruza Alta, and here the correo stopped nearly an hour, to get all the information he could about the Indians. The little place was full of women, who had fled hither, from a fear of being carried off by those wild sons of the Pampas, a feat these modern Romans most willingly and not unfrequently, if they get a chance, accomplish. Of course the most dreadful stories were current about the savages, and my guide collected a perfect heap of murders, to spread dismay far and wide on our journey.

The next day we were galloping along our path, keeping at the same time a sharp eye towards the south, when we suddenly perceived right before us, first a large cloud of dust, and then discerned some black objects in the midst of it. We all stopped at the same moment, and the postilion groaned "los Indios;" but my telescope told me that it was nothing but a large vehicle, drawn by horses, and coming on at a rattling pace. The moving mass, as it drew

nearer, proved to be a large clumsy omnibus, not drawn as such carriages are in our country, but by six foaming horses, each with the wild figure of a guacho on its back, and fastened to the shaft by a ring in the strong hide belt or surcingle, which is bound round the middle of the horse.

When we came near, the vehicle stopped, and a parley commenced between the guachos and the correo about the Indians. At the same time a window was opened, disclosing the yellow and wrinkled features of an old gentleman within, having a pair of green spectacles on his nose, and who anxiously inquired for the latest murders. Five or six other faces appeared at the different sashes, belonging to as many boys—the old gentleman's fellow-travellers, and I found to my satisfaction that one of the boys could speak English. His parents lived at Valparaiso, and he was going with his tutor or professor to Buenos Ayres. But he would answer no questions, only wanting to hear about the Indians, all they had done, and all they were likely to do, and listened with pale features to the dreadful stories which the old rascal of a correo freely communicated to his teacher. To console him, I told him there was not one word of truth in these horrors, as we had seen no Indians, and I did not believe there was one within two hundred

miles of us. But the Cordilleras! How was it with them? The most interesting point for me lay there. Should I be able to cross them? The boy answered: "Yes, in summer time; but now they are snow-locked." Snow-locked? bah! I began to expect there was as much foundation for this conjecture as for the stories about the Indians. Indians there certainly were somewhere, but the plains were wide, and it was very unlikely that we should meet them.

It was an extremely disagreeable sight as we proceeded, to meet such a quantity of small wooden crosses. We saw every day two or three, often even more, of these memorials, and they all marked the spot where some poor traveller had been murdered, not by the savage Indians alone, but by the hardly less treacherous guachos. These are indeed a great deal too ready with their long, sharp knives, and revenge or cupidity too often prompts their willing hand.

On the 26th, we saw the first blue mountain ridges, a good way off towards the north. These were the Cordoba range, and our direction lay to the western point of it, That night we stopped in a village, called after the little river close by, Rio Guarto. Here we met another correo, who came from Mendoza, and was going to Cordoba. He knew nothing about the Cordilleras, but a great deal about the Indians; and, if he spoke truth,

they had chased him to the very entrance of the last little town he had passed. But there had been only ten or twelve of the "brown devils," as he called them, and twelve of them should not chase us, though it was a different case with him, as he carried no fire-arms.

The inhabitants of the Pampas, as well as those of the larger towns in South America, are very fond of cock-fighting. They like all amusements which are attended with bloodshed, and the correo we had met carried with him four very large and strong-looking fighting-cocks, in different baskets, fastened to the pack-horse, which as we all slept in one large room, were deposited in the four different corners of our chamber, and the cocks were then taken out, and fastened by one leg to some stakes driven in the ground, and intended to support a table-board or a bench.

I was engaged writing letters till very late, when I threw myself down on my blanket, with the saddle for my pillow, but I could only have slept about half-an-hour ere I was suddenly roused by a most dreadful noise, sounding like a trumpet in my very ear. I jumped up as if I had been shot. Before I could collect my senses, the same noise burst from another corner of the room, and presently from two corners at once. It was the cocks crowing, and sure enough they kept at it. [illegible] breaking, though I could yet see no

gleam of light on the dark sky; and though I poked at the fowl nearest to me, to keep it at least quiet, it was without effect, and the other three crowed all the time; so we had it for the remainder of the night, and a pleasant night it was.

I had been told there was a countryman of mine living at this place, and not being able to find him late on the evening before, I went for him early this morning. He was a funny little fellow—by trade a stonemason; but on coming out here to the Pampas, and finding no stones, he had become a hat-maker, taken of course a wife, and was raising a family of six or seven children. At this time Rio Guarto was, on account of the Indians, garrisoned with troops, and a number of fugitives had taken refuge within its walls; and the little fellow thought an eating-house would agree very well with his business. Many preparations not being necessary, he had set up shop, got himself half-a-dozen plates, two or three bottles of aqua-ardiente, and some forks, all placed behind a small bar in his mud-walled parlour, and the hotel was furnished. As I entered his room, six or seven soldiers were standing about the bar taking their breakfast—a piece of pudding, a sausage, and, a luxury here, a slice of bread; and a bowl of coffee, with red pepper and salt, were standing on the table, and each man had a glass of aqua-ardiente before him.

It is, indeed, a very easy matter to keep a boarding-house in the Pampas; and as they seem never to wash plates or dishes, the landlady can do very comfortably all the work, which consists merely of putting a kettle on the fire to boil the sausages and the water for coffee and maté.

My countryman was from the Rhine, and having lived better than twenty years in this country, had nearly forgotten all his German. While speaking with me, he made such free use of Spanish words, that I ought really to have known both languages to keep up the discourse. He did not like the Pampas —and I did not blame him if he called that uncomfortable place where he lived, his home. He wished to be once more in Germany, but having no means of getting there, or if there, any means of subsisting, he himself thought it a hopeless case. He had heard that there had been a revolution, but did not believe it; and said, that if things were bad now in Germany, they were worse in South America. He told me the soil was very productive, but people did not sow or plant anything, as there existed so many bad "hombres," who would steal the produce a great deal faster than it could grow. With respect to politics, he only spoke the common sentiment of the people. Rosas, then at the head of the government, kept the country quiet; but how long would his rule last? A new revolution would bring a new president, and how would the

wild guachos in the Pampas behave then? Even now they were hard to manage, and always ready for riot and plunder. Would the next government be strong enough to keep them in order?

This universal apprehension explains why no improvement is ever attempted in the country; all are afraid of a new revolution, and seem willing to keep themselves in the best circumstances for such a contingency—that is, not to encumber themselves with any property.

I left my countryman as I had found him. His life, he said, was very miserable. Civility was not to be found among the guachos, and if once in a way a countryman arrived, it was always exactly as with me: he stopped for an hour or two, and was gone.

On the 27th we reached another little town, also garrisoned with soldiers, and called Achiras; and the next day galloped from morning till night through a most desolate and barren stretch of country without any road, and riding over in a straight line towards a distant hill which we could just see on the horizon. This eminence was called El Morro, and we reached it late in the afternoon. On the other side we found a camp of soldiers, and here they were really required, for the Indians had shown themselves in the neighbourhood. At the hut where we changed horses, the mountain home of two young persons, the host told us that they

had not long ago killed his brother. He also showed us one of their lances taken in fight. It was a bamboo-pole, fourteen feet long, with an old bayonet fastened at the end.

Round the camp grazed several troops of horses, guarded by young fellows, wild-looking enough to be Indians themselves. They had to keep the horses ready for the soldiers to spring in the saddle at a moment's warning, and guards were stationed on the top of the hill to watch the surrounding country.

The soldiers' camp at the very foot of the Morro, was a scene of great animation, with its troops of horses and camp-fires, and whole bevies of women, either busy in the tents and huts, or broiling meat on the fire and carrying fuel from the nearest shrubs; yet it was certainly more like a camp of gipsies than of soldiers.

We started with fresh horses, though they were the worst we had had through the whole route; all the best, I suppose, having been impressed by the soldiers. If the Indians had attacked us that night, we should have been in an unenviable situation, but as it was, we reached our quarters in safety.

In the evening I had the good fortune to witness an Argentine partridge hunt. Galloping along the plain we started a flock, which separated, and we saw one dropping down again not far from us,

in some bushy grass. The correo, with a significant nod, as if he intended to say, "Watch me, will you?" turned towards the spot, till he approached within twenty yards, when he commenced swinging his long whip round his head like a lasso, and, encircling the place where the single partridge lay, at a short, quick gallop, he narrowed the circle more and more, keeping his whip all the time in motion. The poor little partridge, meanwhile, squatted down as close as it could under the grass to keep out of the way of the swinging cord, when he suddenly struck downwards and killed it on the spot.

Without alighting from his horse, the old fellow picked up the dead bird, and then rode on, without having lost more than two or three minutes by the incident.

The next morning, the postilion took a broad, thin piece of raw meat, and put it—why should I scruple to tell the reader, since I had to eat it? —under his own seat, upon the saddle, covered over, it is true, out of regard to cleanliness, with an old untanned sheepskin, which had served at least two or three years for a saddle-cloth, and which slipped about under him in a most distressing manner.

"And did you eat this delicate morsel?" cries the reader. "I could not have touched it."

Oh yes, dear reader, if you had galloped be-

tween sixty and eighty miles, and really could get nothing else, you would take to it readily; at least, I did.

About twelve o'clock we met one of the Mendoza caravans, a train of about thirty large waggons or carts (for they all run on two wheels), which moved slowly, creaking and jarring one behind the other, across the plains to Buenos Ayres. These waggons carry the produce of the rich district of Mendoza, consisting principally of flour, wine and raisins, to the city, and go commonly in large numbers for mutual protection, not only against the Indians, but also against their own countrymen, whose mouths not unfrequently water at sight of their rich freight.

The waggons deserve a short description. They rest, as I have already said, on two wheels, which are really gigantic in size. The framework is tolerably light, for the sides are almost always made of basket-work, having the upper part covered with raw hides. The high wheels, I was told, are necessary for the Pampas, in wet weather; but they give the vehicles, with their high, narrow bodies, a most singular appearance. Under the waggon, when travelling through those parts of the Pampas where there are no bushes, they carry some wood for fuel; and on the back part, secured by leather thongs, a high earthen water-jar; for part of the route is a perfect wilderness of sand

and salt, and not even drinking water can be had for very long distances. But the water thus provided is for the men, as the oxen are obliged to put up with the brackish water found in the ponds.

The waggoners drive their oxen in a way peculiar to themselves, perfectly harmonizing with their southern indolence. Usually three or four yoke are fastened to the shaft, and to drive these with a whip, it would need to be a very long and heavy one; but this would not be agreeable, and therefore they have another "fixing," which is a very long pole, generally a bamboo, which swings from the forepart of the waggon in such a way as to reach out with its sharp iron-pointed end to the farthest yoke, at the same time being balanced at the butt-end by some weight, it is very easily managed. The driver, who leans lazily back in the forepart of the waggon, needs only to keep the bamboo swinging; being able, at the same time, to reach the first yoke with its point. The third yoke, indeed, cannot be reached in this way, and for their benefit another point, about a foot long, is fastened right over their backs, and the driver has only to lift up the butt-end of the pole, and the point drops down on the poor beasts. For the two yoke nearest to his waggon, he carries another little pole, also sharp-pointed, and just long enough to reach the second yoke.

When attacked by the Indians, they group in

the same way as the emigrant waggons on the western prairies of North America, forming a kind of fortification, half of the waggons coming round in a semi-circle, and halting, while the other half close the circle. The cattle are brought into the centre, and the waggoners having lances, and not unfrequently fire-arms, bid defiance to the rushing swarm of savages, who cannot use their bolas or lassos against such an impenetrable mass, and generally retreat with the loss of a couple killed or wounded.

Our next halting-place was San Luis, the principal town of the province of that name. Here the governor sent for the correo, and told him that he had very narrowly escaped a horde of Indians, who had been lying in wait for him farther north, on the route he usually took, when the savages were on the move, and had thus missed us. They had advanced this year farther up towards the north, as the spies reported to the governor, than ever they had before, and had even ventured into the mountains, which they had not left when the messengers came off to San Luis with the unwelcome news, as fast as their horses could carry them. A corps of cavalry was instantly sent out after them, to cut off their retreat; but I never heard how far they succeeded.

San Luis is about seventy-seven leguas from the foot of the Cordilleras, and we could see from

here the blue range of the vast mountains as plain as if they had been within a distance of twenty miles. The ridge stretched itself like an immense monster, with its snow-filled chasms—a gigantic snake of ice, between the sunny valleys of the south.

From San Luis our road lay through a perfect desert—a sandy flat, full of thorns and myrtle-bushes, with no water, no cool or shady place at which men or beast could refresh. Through a distance of twelve leagues—and they seemed twenty in that desolate district—we saw scarcely a living thing, only once a lonesome sparrow, and shortly afterwards a single buzzard; and this last passed over the dry and dusty bushes with a starved, melancholy look, depressing to behold.

The next day we had the same country: nothing but sand, sand, sand, myrtle and thorns, and low dry bush, with singular crumbling wood—the correo did not even know the name of it in Spanish. It had a veiny, rough stem, from about one to two inches thick, and I could crush it very easily between my fingers. I counted five distinct kinds of myrtle. On one the leaves looked exactly like oak-leaves, though not much larger than those of a common myrtle; another bush had leaves shaped like a sharp-cut heart, but all were like our myrtle in blossom and seed.

This day we only changed horses once. There

was no place where a station could be erected, owing to the want of water; and the poor beasts had first to make thirteen, and the next, sixteen leagues, without anything to eat, there being not so much as a blade of grass that whole distance. It was a wearisome ride, and what a stretch for the poor pack-horse, with about two hundred pounds upon its back, and going half the way in a gallop, over sinking sand, the old correo whipping it continually, and wanting to keep in a gallop the whole distance. But that was impossible, the soft sand being too fatiguing. The horses, however, stood it well; but next day, when the station people brought us, in just such another wilderness, a pack-horse, whose back was one perfect sore from neck to hip, and wanted it to gallop a stage of ten leguas, exhausted nature for once gave in, and the poor beast dropped down in the path, without being able to rise again. The packs were then removed from its back, and put on the postilion's horse, the correo taking the large portmanteau on his own, and away we went, leaving the postilion behind with the helpless brute, for which he could not procure a drop of water or a handful of grass. Nor had he, poor fellow, a piece of bread or a drop of anything to drink himself, and the only water was a little muddy and brackish pond about half a mile distant. But for this my correo did not care: the one was only a horse, the

other a peon, a servant, to be treated but little better than a slave.

In truth, I was astonished when I first entered the republic, to see how contemptuously the cavalleros treated the lower classes. They call their country a republic, and the inhabitants republicans, but I had another idea of that form of government till I came here. The peon of South America—for I found afterwards the same thing in Chili—is treated very little better than the coloured man in the United States. If he approaches a superior, it is cap in hand—he dare not sit at the same table with him; and even while we slept in the Pampas, however low and miserable our lodging, while we lay under shelter, the poor postilion had to sleep outside in the cold, wet air, with no covering but his thin poncho. Whether these men were governed by a chief, king, or president, it would be all the same. God has given them rights, but they do not know it; and if ever they do understand them, they will become, on their emancipation, worse than beasts of prey delivered from their cage.

The 2nd of July we reached at last the little village of Pescara ó Rodeo Chacon, only twenty-three leguas from Mendoza, and bordering that fertile province. Here we were able to procure the horses plenty of food and water, and we ourselves

got a clean table, good Mendoza bread, and most excellent Mendoza wine.

In the evening, just as we were preparing our beds, tolerably wearied with our long day's ride, I heard, in a neighbouring hut, the tones of a guitar, accompanied by a man's voice. Playing the guitar is a very common amusement of the Spanish race, and I had heard it often on our road. They almost invariably sing with the music, but their voices are not always mellifluous. On this occasion, I was proceeding, despite the music, to roll myself up in my poncho, while the old correo twisted for himself a last cigaretto for the night, when the miserable song I had first heard was followed by another, and now aroused, I listened with pleasure to the voice of a master. My curiosity was excited, and though the correo shook his head, and grumbled something about being out of one's senses, getting up in the night to hear a crazy old song, I wrapped my poncho round me, and repaired to the neighbouring hut.

As I entered the room, the men moved aside for me in a friendly way, so that I could have a fair look into the interior. I saw a young, tall fellow, his poncho thrown off, and having a guitar on his arm, leaning on a low bed, formed of stakes driven in the ground, with a cow-hide stretched

over them, and touching the instrument with light and skilful fingers. His black curly hair fell in long silken ringlets round his fine, maiden-like forehead, and his dark eyes glistened in the animation of the song. He wore a short, dark-blue jacket, and round his waist a broad embroidered belt, common in the Pampas and fastened in the fore-part with six large buttons, made of Spanish dollars, while about ten or twelve more dollars formed a kind of ornament indicating the wealth of the wearer. Under this belt, in the back of which was stuck a large knife, with a beautiful ivory handle, he wore a parti-coloured cheripaw, and his feet were encased, not in the hide-botas of the guachos, but in well-blacked boots, which showed a small and fine foot to advantage. His neck was encircled by a blood-red kerchief, and a broad-brimmed straw-hat lay at his side. He was, in fact, the finest specimen of a wild young guacho that I had yet seen; and though his features were so soft and even womanly, unusual fire and animation glowed and worked in his eyes.

I had hardly entered when he began the second part of his song, and while the first had been soft and plaintive, it was wild and reckless now. At the same time his words struck home, and thundering bravos resounded on all sides, while men and women collected more and more, till the room became crowded.

I felt very sorry that I did not understand enough of the language to catch the meaning of his song; but I know that it touched on love and war, and, I doubt not, had some political allusions, for this part of the Argentine republic, as I heard afterwards in Mendoza, was by no means enthusiastic for the government of Rosas. When the young man's song was finished, another caught up the guitar, and answered him, though not with such a beautiful voice, but the roof shook with the perfect shouts of laughter and bravos, which he elicited.

I remained at the concert more than an hour, and when I sought my couch, it was a long while before I could get to sleep, so great was the noise.

Next morning, in order to reach Mendoza in good time, we made a very early start; it was hardly four o'clock when we were roused by the new postilion—the old one had come in about an hour before, having left the broken-down horse dead on the spot where it fell. We galloped along a tolerably plain road, till the rising sun lit up the country, and showed us in the distance, but now not so far off, the towering blue range of the Cordilleras, over which there hung a most singular streak of white clouds, spotted and striped with darker lines in a very peculiar manner. I had never in my life seen such a formation of cloud, but the

mountains claimed for the moment all my attention, so that I could hardly look at the sky, but I wondered how we could not, at so short a distance, distinguish the snow on such a lofty and extensive range.

The first ten leguas of the soil over which we passed was not much better than that traversed on the two previous days, the vegetation being exactly similar, except that the bush was less thorny—in fact, there was hardly anything to be seen but myrtle-bushes; but soon a row of high, slim poplar-trees, planted in regular lines, as it seemed, showed the boundary-line of the desert, and we reached a tract of plantations, in which orchards, pastures, vineyards, gardens, and fields, alternated. Masses of screaming parrots hung in the poplars, or shot with nimble wings from one field to another, and hundreds of turtle-doves filled the large and majestic fig-trees, or cooed from the dark foliage of the orange-trees, while well-fed cattle and horses roamed at will over the pastures. It was, indeed, a sweet scene for the eye to rest upon.

From this station, after a repast of fruit and wine, we rode down a kind of broad alley, with plantations on either side, towards a low, flat hill, which at first obstructed our view, but on reaching an open place, we saw far ahead of us a wide and fertile plain, dotted with houses and plantations; and there—I involuntarily grasped the reins of my

horse—was spread before us a scene of enchantment. I could not turn my eye from the horizon, though unable to embrace in one long gaze all the features of that wonderful sight.

How can I describe in words what, at the first glance, even the sight could not comprehend, and which reason will scarcely believe?

Stretched out in front of me, as far to the north and south as eye could reach, lay the blue, wide range I had recognised, even at San Luis, as the Cordilleras, topped by a singular snake-like drift, which I had thought at first to be clouds and misty banks, but which, parted now by rocks and hollow clefts, and snow-filled, snow-decked dales, rose high into the clouds that covered the upper ridge, and above, far above, gigantic peaks still shot up as if from the clouds, and sparkled in the sun, as it fell on their ice and snow-crowned summits. Following with my eye those giddy heights, I halted speechless—overpowered—and as I looked up at the rugged-pronged peaks, on whose points the heavens seemed to rest, tears filled my eyes. My heart was too full, and expressed its emotion in tears.

My companions, who were familiar with the sight and cared little about it, left me behind, galloping on their road at full speed; and, at length, clapping spurs to my horse, I galloped down the long easy slope, that stretched out towards

Mendoza, though my eye remained rivetted on the snowy chain, the backbone of a world, that lay before me in gigantic majesty.

But the road itself soon required more of my attention than I had yet bestowed upon it. We were approaching a large and populous town, and signs of traffic and business began to appear. I passed strings of mules, laden heavily with the produce of distant provinces, on its way to Mendoza, while others were going back with their light straw pack-saddles on their backs, quite empty, and running along in a quick and lively trot. Passengers, too, were numerous, and the country was highly cultivated, and dotted with small homely dwelling-houses, here standing alone, there sociably clustered together. Looking on this wide and fertile plain, it was easy to understand how Mendoza had come to be called the granary of the Argentine republic.

Reaching a piece of low, swampy, and reedy ground, where the soil was too wet to favour agriculture, I got time again to raise my eye to the magnificent mountains; and a kind of dread rose in my heart, as I thought that I, weak, helpless being, should dare to cross their snowy heights, where grim winter had gathered all his terrors, letting them loose sometimes in gales and whirlwinds, that spread death and desolation around. But there was also a singular charm in this con-

sciousness of one's own strength, and courage withal to dare the elements in their very teeth; and indeed I now only thought of the grandeur and splendour of the mountains; their terrors were yet too distant to disturb the pleasure of the moment.

As my eye ran over the wide, fertile plains, and the warm sunny dale—for, though the middle of winter, the air was as warm as it is with us in May—I thought, how good and righteous must be the dwellers in the land, surrounded by this glorious world, presenting everything to lead them to be good and great; but my reflections were interrupted by the correo.

"Compañero," he said, reining up his horse, "mire aqua!" and he pointed upwards with his arm.

I looked up, and my hand again grasped my bridle, but this time in surprise and disgust. Close to the road, and leaning a little forward, was a long and stout pole, driven in the soft ground, and on the top was a ghastly human head, with the long matted black hair and beard fluttering in the breeze.

"This was a blood-thirsty murderer," resumed my guide, "whose last feat was to butcher a whole family. It was here, favoured by this swamp, that he and his gang committed their atrocities on poor travellers. The miscreant was caught at

last, and the governor had his head stuck up here, as a warning for his companions. Since that time, they have left the place, and there have been no other murders here lately."

Such was the short account of the transaction which the old guacho gave, while the hideous head of the murderer stared with death-fixed eyes upon the glories of nature around, unequalled in beauty by any single spot in the world—a dreadful mark in this peaceful scene.

That head—a sight too often encountered in this republic, where also there is hardly a spot at which the traveller does not come upon a wooden cross, the silent memorial of some bloody deed—marred all my pleasure. But the swift horses bore us at full speed towards the small and friendly frontier town of Mendoza. Around us were vineyards and villas, with walled-up fields and gardens, showing the careful industry of the inhabitants, while those narrow streets looked as if they stretched out their arms to welcome and shelter me from all the dangers and hardships of that vast plain.

CHAPTER VIII.

MENDOZA.

We entered the friendly streets of Mendoza about two o'clock in the afternoon. The aspect of the little town is entirely in the old Spanish style: the houses low and flat-roofed, with wide yards attached, but of a more cleanly appearance than those of Buenos Ayres, but to me every house seemed like a home, for we had now left behind us those vast plains of La Plata, so abounding with terrors and dangers. Behind lay the long ride on horseback and the blood-thirsty hordes of savages, and I could now rest after the hardships and fatigues I had overcome. The winter journey over the snow-locked Cordilleras was still to be accomplished, with its temporales and yawning precipices. But what of them? They were three, four, it might be eight days ahead, and should certainly not trouble me at this happy moment.

Mendoza, the principal town of the province of that name, is inhabited by about eight thousand souls, and lies at the foot of the Cordilleras, which seem to rise up from the very houses into the skies. I had felt a certain regard and esteem for the little town, even before I had the pleasure of setting foot in it. All the caravans we met, loaded with the produce of the country; all the wine, fruit, flour, bread, cheese, and aqua-ardiente which we were able to procure on the road, where did it all come from but Mendoza? And, certainly, the comfortable appearance of the whole place, as I made my entry into it, was in keeping with its reputation.

The town itself indeed is nothing extraordinary, the quantity of adobe houses always at first giving a stranger the impression that the next heavy rain must wash the whole place into one heap of mud and tiles, from which the forsaken chimneys would look rather astonished at the surrounding devastation. But such catastrophes never happen; the mud is stamped and plastered hard and fast, and rain after rain wears off very little or nothing of the time-hardened walls.

Mendoza would be an opulent and more flourishing town, if it possessed some better means of communication with neighbouring countries. From the east it is cut off by the vast and often dangerous plains, which cannot be safely traversed,

except by large caravans, or in the best case, by numerous droves of pack-mules; and towards the west lie the high, towering ridge of the Cordilleras, cutting off in winter all thoroughfare for traffic, and not unfrequently even for passengers, and in summer affording only a tedious and dangerous path for pack-mules. In spite of these disadvantages, Mendoza is the granary of the Argentine republic; and throughout the summer sends in every direction, even as far as Chili, drove after drove of mules, laden with raisins, wine, and other produce.

Several foreigners reside at Mendoza, principally Englishmen and Americans, and I met one Italian who spoke German, and three of my countrymen. Two of these last were hat-makers—the Germans in the Pampas seem to take to hat-making—and the third was a goldsmith. But next spring the traveller may look for these sojourners in vain; they had all set their thoughts towards the north-west, to the irresistible diggings. But it was indeed a pleasure to me to find them at Mendoza, for they were, in every respect, very kind and obliging, and treated me in a very friendly and cordial manner.

I made acquaintance here with an American gentleman, Mr. Vandice, who has the merit of having introduced the first printing-press into the Cordilleras. With the enterprise characteristic of

his country, he brought the press with him from the United States, and commenced printing in a town and country where the art was not only unknown, but where he had to create a demand for it. In this he had at last succeeded. The Mendozians had as yet received all their newspapers and books from Buenos Ayres. A newspaper he could not establish, as nothing new ever happened at Mendoza, and any event that might occur would have been known in every family, before he could have printed it; but after having studied the Spanish language to perfection, and to master it more readily—having married a very pretty young lady from Achiras—he started a monthly review, devoted to useful and entertaining knowledge. But this was only the first step in the enterprise, and he had now to hawk the periodical out by the single copy, leaving it himself, as he told me, at the houses of the different persons whom he expected to become subscribers, and who conceived the pleasing delusion that the obliging foreigner had presented them with the "book," till a bill reminded them of the obligation. In this way he got—not unlike the Yankee clock-pedlars in the West—a stock of subscribers; for the señoras considered it a kind of fashion, and he was then on the safe side.

Besides this periodical, he reprinted the schoolbooks, which Mendoza received from Buenos

Ayres; and the State having, I presume, no copyright, left him in quiet possession of his spoils.

After this, he went a step farther, and taught the Mendozians not only the use, but also the necessity of visiting-cards, things they had, up to that time, only known by the reports of daring travellers. He commenced first with having them himself, and spreading them through the town; then he persuaded the governor to try the experiment, when the vanity of the female population — who gloried in having their names printed—was excited, and visiting-cards became the rage.

But notwithstanding his success—which was gained indeed only by great efforts—spite of the greatest difficulties, such as having, for example, to create his journeymen printers, by raising apprentices himself—he was already tired of the business, and ready to sell out and start for the diggings. He had, in fact, a strong bias towards California, and I only hope he did not afterwards give way to it.

If outward show makes good republicans, the Mendozians are the very best, for they sport their red-coloured ribbons, waistcoats, and everything else to excess, and their very boots are striped with red "Federacion ó muertè." If an article can possibly be dyed red, they will not have it in any other colour. But this has all been changed

since, and the Argentine republic has thrown off its red ponchos and Rosas together.

The red ribbons were at this time more rampant at Mendoza than in Buenos Ayres itself, where strangers at least were not troubled with this nonsense; but here no foreigner was allowed to enter the palace court, without a red ribbon round his hat, and another in his button-hole, bearing the old device: "Viva la confederacion Argentina; mueran los salvajes, &c. Unitarios."

After having lived such a long time on meat, with hardly any vegetables or fruits, I enjoyed the delicious Mendozian fruits very much, and was eating them nearly all day. They were very cheap, and for six cents (threepence) I could eat as many oranges, grapes, and figs as I pleased, for two or three days together.

The Mendozian wine is most excellent. It is nearly all red, sweet, and with a great deal of spirit, but the flavour is delicious. Like the fruit, it is very cheap. When we sent for some in the evening, we paid commonly one real (sixpence) for a gallon.

The vineyards are kept in a different way here from those in our country, on account of the very warm climate. On the Rhine, and in all the northern states, they want as much sun for the ripening grapes as they possibly can get; but in this secluded spot, sheltered from the sharp west and

south-west winds by the Cordilleras, they have rather too much sun than otherwise, and therefore plant their vines in a kind of arbour, in rows, on tolerably high poles, from whence they reach over to one another, forming shady and covered walks, in which the grapes, after the hot season commences, hang in the shade of their own leaves.

Bread, meat, and vegetables are cheap in the same proportion; rents and servants' wages are low. The country itself is really a paradise, and what can man wish for more? Would not this be a happy asylum for all who are tired of a busy life; tired of politics? Of European politics they would in this place indeed hear nothing more, but they would have to deal with Argentine revolutions.

On the 9th of July I had the good fortune to witness one of the festivals in honour of the Confederation and liberty, as they call it—just as we call our war in Germany of 1815 the war of liberty, or rather as it is called by our kings. In the morning of that day they had a great parade in the public square, and in the evening the town was illuminated. The soldiers, a small troop of regulars, numbering about one hundred and twenty or one hundred and fifty men, sauntered slowly, and at it seemed, leisurely through the streets to very indifferent music, which some negroes tried to blow out of a couple of horns and trumpets. They wore perfectly white uniforms, with red

caps and facings, and had muskets with bayonets; but as they drew nigh, I found that their lower garments were not all quite of the colour of innocence. Very great discipline, or regard to uniformity, did not exist; some had shoes, some boots, and some corns on their feet. Others carried their boots over their arms, one hanging down on each side, an arrangement to which the officers, of course, could have no objection. As they marched along, they carried on a very lively, and I doubt not a very interesting conversation.

The illumination was a much more brilliant affair, and was ordered in some parts of the town, even after dark, by a parcel of soldiers, who rode through the streets, and stopped before each door, shouting some unintelligible words, when they pressed on to the next one without waiting for a reply.

The houses of Mendoza, as I have already observed, are built after the old Spanish style; in large squares, inclosing roomy yards, with hardly any windows towards the front of the street, and those grated. The illumination, therefore, was effected by four or five tallow-candles placed before the house on the pavement, and the boys in the streets took upon themselves the regulation of the festivity, carrying away a candle here, where they thought one less would do, and planting it in some more favourite spot. The illumination lasted as long as

the fourth part of a tallow-candle would admit. There is nothing more pitiful in this world, than any kind of rejoicing ordered by government.

Next day, I saw the Argentine cavalry on their return from getting their ration—a piece of meat, which they always hang in a commodious manner on their left stirrup, and gallop along through the town, striking it against the horses' legs and belly and against their own dirty feet. The cavalry use stirrups, and wear shoes. The common guachos in the Pampas, in riding, use only small pieces of wood fastened to the stirrup-leather, which slip between their two first toes, sticking out of the bota of raw hide, so that the whole foot rests upon them.

These soldiers had to march out a few days afterwards, as the Indians—dare-devils as they were—had crossed the desert, and shown themselves in force close to the frontier settlements, which sent for succour to the town. The correo, to whom I spoke about it, told me he was sure they had followed his track, for the Indians, as all the spies reported, had some white leaders, of course from the party of the Unitarios; and as he himself had brought to Mendoza some very important despatches, and a not inconsiderable quantity of gold in his old portmanteau, it was very probable that they had got wind of the fact, and done their utmost to intercept him. On missing him at El

Morro, they had pushed on to overtake him, in which I was very glad that they were foiled.

All this time I was of course busy inquiring about the possibility of crossing the Cordilleras, and where I could get a guide. Though hearing even here some dreadful stories about the temporales, or snow-storms of those regions, I was not disheartened; for I learned, at the same time, that between the gales there was always an interval of fine weather, in which travellers, if the snow had hardened enough, could cross over in comparative security. All the little by-stories then, of freezing to death and getting blinded by the sunlit snow, fell on a deaf ear, as I had already heard more terrible tales, which proved to have no foundation.

My first object was to find a vaquiano, and this in fact seemed my chief difficulty; for there was only one man in the place willing to risk the passage at this time of the year, when there had just been a very heavy snowfall; and he asked three hundred dollars for his trouble—a sum I could not afford. He said that he did not like to risk his life for nothing, and would at least have some recompense for the peril. Three hundred dollars were at that time to me of more consequence than all the savages of the Pampas and the temporales of the mountains together; but the man did not mean what he said. After a quarter of an hour's debate, he came down to two

hundred: the next day he was willing to take one hundred; and the day after, I made an agreement with him to take me over for five ounces in gold—he finding mules to the edge of the snow, and others again in Chili, while I was to supply provisions, and hire two men to carry my saddle, rations, and charcoal. The sum demanded was then about the value of £17 in Mendoza.

It required a couple of days to complete our preparations; for we had to secure provisions enough to hold out, if caught by a temporale, for two or three weeks in one of the stone-huts or casuchas, which are built along the winter track over the mountains. For provisions mountain-travellers usually take, besides some onions, salt, and coffee, as main stock, their charque, or dried beef, which they prepare in such a manner as to compress into the smallest space the greatest amount of nutriment; and for this purpose they hammer down the hard and tough charque as flat as possible, knocking one piece upon the other, till a mass of some thirty pounds is reduced into about a square foot of space.

Through the help of my countrymen I got also some good bread, and with an iron boiler, to boil some water for coffee, or "caldo," I was perfectly equipped for the march.

But the Spaniards are nearly as tedious and ridiculous with their passports as we are in Germany.

Although I had received a passport *visé* from Buenos Ayres to Valparaiso, I had to undergo the same ceremony here, except that I got my passport gratis at Buenos Ayres, while they were friendly enough here to charge me five dollars for permission to leave the republic. When I protested against a new visa, and told them at the police-office of that I had already received, they asked me very quietly what they had to do with that; and as I could of course give them no satisfactory reply, my only alternative was to pay the five dollars.

The payment made, my passport went the whole circuit of the police-office, out of one room into another, and I with it, through five different apartments, and past five different functionaries, till it became like an album, full of autographs, and inscribed five times over with the motto of the Argentine republic: "Viva la confederacion Argentina, mueran los salvajes Unitarios."

CHAPTER IX.

A WINTER PASSAGE ACROSS THE CORDILLERAS.

On the 11th of July, having made rather a late start to reach only the outskirts of the town, we camped close to a house, without a fire; but though it was a cold night, I slept well, glad enough to have entered at last on the finishing stage of my land voyage. Our little caravan consisted, besides the guide, a Chilean, with a green Chilean poncho, (a colour not particularly liked in the Argentine republic), of two peons or servants, who were to carry my baggage and provisions across the snow when we took to walking, now all mounted on mules.

The morning rose in great beauty. The sky was clear and blue, and when the sun ascended over the wide and ocean-like Pampas, and even a long while before, while it was yet dusky on the plains, the snowy peaks of the gigantic mountains sparkled in his rosy beams, showing their sharp

and rugged outlines on the dark-blue transparent sky. At last the sun threw his warm and glowing rays over the wide landscape, and over the cloud-like snow-fields of the Cordilleras, and the birds chirped, the dew glistened on the green leaves of the bushes, our animals trotted nimbly along the narrow path; and even my companions, in other respects not very agreeable to look upon, sung and whistled, as much in love with the beauteous morning as the birds and mules.

To the right of our path stood a solitary and lonesome little house, surrounded by a small garden, and about fifteen steps from the door, in the direction of the path, was a low, thick-stemmed willow, where my three companions suddenly halted, and pulling off their hats sat a few minutes motionless in their saddles, their heads devoutly bent in prayer. I gazed at them in astonishment, when my guide, clapping on his hat again, pointed up, with a grin, at the tree, exclaiming "una bota" (a boot).

I looked up and I saw the foot and leg, up to the knee, of the same murderer whose head had looked down on me from the pole on the other side of Mendoza, nailed on the tree. I turned shuddering away from the disgusting sight, clapped spurs to my mule, and galloped ahead; the peons laughed, but followed.

It may be necessary, no doubt, to hold up to a

people with whom murders are of rather common occurrence, the consequences of such a crime wherever they turn; but it is certainly a most disagreeable thing for one who does not require this reminder, to encounter such a spectacle everywhere in his path. And what had those poor people done, who lived in that house, that they were to have this disgusting sight always before them?

Leaving this accursed spot behind us, the quickly changing scenery brought new and happier thoughts, and my attention was soon arrested by whole herds of guanakas—a species of lama—which, though we were hardly four leguas from town, continually broke through the bushes and scampered over the first slopes of the rising hills.

The guanaka is a splendid animal, larger than the Virginian deer, with a longer neck and soft, splendid wool. But there is not much sport in shooting them, as they are not shy enough; and I believe I could have killed a dozen in a few hours, if I had been so disposed. The flesh, especially of the younger guanaka, is most excellent.

At a distance of thirteen leguas from Mendoza, during which we had held nearly a northern course, we enter the frontier hills of the Cordilleras. As yet we had seen no trees—nothing but low shrubby bushes grew in the dales, or on the slopes, where flocks of tame goats, the property of some mountaineers, grazed and climbed about.

In the afternoon we progressed rapidly in the ascent, keeping all the time close to a little water-course, with rocky and high cliffs rising up on each side.

That night we had some difficulty in finding a good sleeping-place; but camped at last under the shelter of a high, steep rock, not far from a small trickling stream. Wood was very scarce, and we were obliged to be satisfied with just sufficient fire to broil some meat and boil some water for coffee, turning in afterwards, or rather turning out under the open shelving rock. Being so fresh from a warm country, I felt excessively chilled that night. We had passed the previous night in the open air, and it was, in comparison, warm to this place, which I had thought perfectly sheltered by the rocks. Next morning I found the water which I had standing near me, in a tin cup, as a drink, was frozen.

This was the first sign of our having made some headway up the mountains; and after half-an-hour's march that morning, we found plenty more. The little stream, by whose bank we shaped our way, was covered with ice, and where it had overflown the path, a very common occurrence, the ground was so slippery that our mules slid about, sometimes in a really dangerous manner. The exclamation by which my Chilean guide sought to encourage and cheer the poor animals, was charac-

teristic, it was, "Oh mula, oh mula!" reminding them that they were mules—and how could mules slip? In truth, the poor animals tried their best, and always succeeded, so that we passed places where horses would have broken their own and their riders' necks.

Higher and higher we climbed, till reaching the first summits we found ourselves on a flat and naked, snow-covered ridge; but though these hills are tolerably high, and would be called in many countries mountains, here, in comparison with the Cordilleras, they seem contemptible, and the Mendozians gave them the rather equivocal name of the "piojos de las Cordilleras."

The highest spur of the hills suddenly opened a panorama, the beauty of which I shall never forget. Right below us lay a warm, green valley, overgrown with dark thickets of bush, traversed by a small stream like a silver thread, running up to the rugged, snow-covered steeps of the mountains, which rose almost perpendicularly on high, towering even from where we stood, far up into the clouds, and changing in colour from the dazzling white of the sunlit snow-fields to the dark hollows of the sharp-cut clefts in which no snow could stick, and which seemed to pierce deep into the very heart of the mountains where they opened their black yawning chasms.

But as the terrors of that wintry region drew

nearer, I became impatient to try my fortune on its giddy heights. My vaquiano, no admirer of scenery —particularly, as he afterwards told me, when it included any snow, which he would have to cross— had got on before me, while I lingered to look around.

As I ascended, I found tracks of the guanakas and also of the puma, or American lion, a kind of large panther, the track of which is somewhat larger than that of the North American panther. I hoped to meet one of these animals in the snow, but my vaquiano told me they were very seldom encountered in the day time, and only prowl about in search of prey at night. The small tracks of foxes appeared at different places.

In the evening we reached a valley—a fertile spot in the midst of barren and snow-clad mountains. Here mules could feed to their hearts' content, and we ourselves had a good meal of guanaka meat, and discussed a couple of bottles of wine, to strengthen ourselves for our next tedious march. The house at which we stopped was the last frontier of the Argentine republic. We therefore bought a couple of horns of wine to take with us on our journey, and the next morning made an early start up the mountains.

The little mountain stream, the Tucunjado, which came down here in a self-opened valley, had its source at the very top of the Cordilleras, and we

had to follow its current to the highest ridge—a ridge that parted, indeed, the waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

We kept on the left shore of the stream, and the chain of the mountains opened before us like an immense portal seeming to admit us into their inmost depths. But slowly and by degrees the path again ran up, and though at first we had the mountain-stream so near us that we could stop to let our mules drink, the next mile brought us many feet above its murmuring water and here I noticed the vestiges of the rushing torrents, which roll down when the hot sun of summer melts the snow-fields on high, and pours the flood into the deep and narrow gullies. The torrents rise at least forty feet above the height at which the water now was, and immense rocks, broken loose by the powerful current, are carried far below, sometimes several hundred feet from their previous position.

At first the path—for it was but a narrow mule track—led up as slowly and on as broad and comfortable a slope as we could wish for; but as the sides of the mountain drew closer and closer together, the path began to run by deep and crumbling banks, and the mules with great difficulty picked their steps. We now passed places where to our left the abyss lay many hundred feet deep, while on the right, impending rocks hung high above us.

But so gradually did the path alter, so little by little did the ridge narrow, and the steep edge of the precipice draw nearer that I did not notice it at first; all my attention being taken up by the scenery. Here I saw the first condor, the giant vulture of the Cordilleras, hovering just above our heads. It altered its course in descending, and flew over towards the other side of the hollow, which seemed to me hardly half a mile distant, but the bird became smaller and smaller, appearing at last not much larger than a crow long before the passage was crossed. Then I felt more than saw the vastness of these mountains, and I was going to stop my mule, to have a fairer view, when a call from my guide, warned me to beware, and look well to my path.

The path, indeed, had become so narrow that it seemed to me, as it wound itself round a projecting rock, absolutely to terminate. I could see nothing more than a thin light streak, as if drawn with a piece of chalk, and I could not believe that this was our path. The rock round which it went did not show the least cut or notch, where even a goat could have planted its feet, let alone our clumsy mules. The little crumbling pieces of stone which our mules' hoofs kicked over the precipice, made me sensible of the danger, falling straight down to a depth that my blood froze to think of.

But this was no place to stop at; and I

observed closely the cautious manner in which my guide raised himself in his right stirrup, not doubting that we were now at the spot of which he had told me before, and where mules and riders were often thrown over. I was therefore careful not to irritate my mule at a place where it certainly knew better how to go than I did—accidents having happened from travellers pulling their bridles at the wrong time. My guide went on very coolly along a trail where mules had to keep the very edge of the precipice. Mules frequently carry a load over this track, when they are very careful not to knock against the over-hanging rock, as the least push would send them over the precipice. Our mules, it is true, had no load, but they were accustomed to carrying one; and therefore kept the extreme edge, to my great discomposure. But I left it entirely to its own instinct, only lifting my left foot in the stirrup, as I saw the vaquiano do, so that, in case of an accident, I might throw myself off its back, and cling to the rock.

But why, the reader may ask, did you not get off the mule at once, and pass dangerous places on foot? Simply, my reader, in the first place, because the danger is the same for many miles; and secondly, because those men who pass their lives in leading travellers over these mountains, know best where to walk, and where to ride, and I followed the example my guide set me. Nor, to

tell the truth, did I at the moment think of anything but my mule, as he moved slowly, step by step, round the yawning abyss, with scarcely three inches to spare on either side. As we proceeded, the path got still narrower, the abyss seemed deeper; and looking down once, between the mule's side and my stirrups, I saw below in the deep hollow a perfect heap of skeletons—mules that must have tumbled down since the last flood—or their bones would have been washed away. In my horror I forgot the warning of the vaquiano, and grasping the reins of my mule, tried to turn it away from the edge, which seemed to me as if it must crumble beneath its next step. My imprudence was near being fatal to me, for turning the head of my mule away from the precipice, it lost its sure footing, stepped aside, and striking the saddle-bags against the rock, it stumbled forward, and — no, dear reader, no such thing—we did not tumble. The mule planted its fore hoofs on a firm part of the crumbling ledge, and lifted itself up again, just as a small piece of stone, loosened by the effort, fell noiselessly from the path, and springing from under us, toppled over, and struck long afterwards with a dull hollow sound into the deep.

I need not be ashamed to say that this little incident made me tremble, and I thought the blood became stagnant in my veins. But mules are splendid animals for such a route; and whether

for the sake of the rider, or their own, they proceed with the utmost caution, as I had now learnt from experience. From that moment I left my mule to do as he pleased, and he carried me safely over.

Just at the end of the passage, where the path again turned round a rock, which hid the guide from view, I reached a snow-drift, or rather a ledge of about ten or twelve paces, where a quantity of snow had drifted from a narrow gulch; and a space not six inches in width, and even that sloping down, was the only footing left. Even the mule now came to a stand. I pressed his flanks with my heels, to urge him on; but the two peons, who came close behind, called to me to alight here, and not attempt to pass that place in the saddle. At the same time, the guide appeared on the other side of the rock, and I saw that he was on foot; but how to get down on such a place was the difficulty. On the left side I should have stepped down at least a couple of hundred feet; therefore, I must try the other. Throwing my leg with a sudden jerk over the mule's neck, I slipped down against the rock, the mule pressing as hard against me as it could, to prevent my pushing it down the precipice. I dodged beneath his head, and with the bridle grasped in my hand, led the way over the snow-drift.

That night we also camped in the very path, though at a broader part, and not far from the snow-

line, which we had seen glistening above us from the time we first entered the gorge. Wood was here very scarce, consisting only of dry thin bushes, which forced themselves out of cracks and fissures in the rocks. Below, in the steep and narrow gulches that run out towards the Tucunjado, we could still see the green myrtles, but none reached the height to which we had now climbed.

Our mules had now, in fact, nothing to subsist upon, except a very little dry wiry grass, and the tops of the bushes; but when I regretted their hard fare, the Chilean remarked that this was nothing, being only the first night; and asked what I would think of the second and third, if I thought this a privation? The second and third! Poor beasts! I began to be sorry that I had taken them so far up with us, since we should in any case have to walk whenever we reached the snow-line; but the Chilean laughed at my scruples. They were only mules; and even in summer-time, when they crossed the Cordilleras, had to subsist, he said, four days together without a blade of grass, sustaining themselves on their own dung strewn over the mountain paths. To obtain them some water, the peons had to crawl with them down the steep slope, to a depth of about three hundred yards, to the Tucunjado.

When we came to a halt, I questioned my guide

as to the skeletons we had seen lying below, and he told me that it very seldom happened that mules bearing riders fell down the precipice, unless they rode in the midst of a drove of pack-mules, a practice now avoided. Mules were generally pushed down by those following, especially if they were young mules, here for the first time, and stepping one after another higher and higher up, till, at last, reaching those places where they could not turn back, even when necessary, they pushed up between the rocks and the animals before them, to escape the precipice, and so forced the outer mules into the abyss.

The little fire that we were able to kindle this night, expired before we fell asleep; but being accustomed, by a long residence in the woods, to camp out, sometimes in very cold weather, I laid my blanket and poncho down backwoods' fashion on the ledge of the rock, rolled myself up in it, and prepared for a comfortable nap, to the admiration of my Chilean guide.

"Bueno compañero!" exclaimed this worthy. "If you understand nothing else, you know at least how to make your bed in the mountains."

Next morning, after a three hours' march over not very dangerous paths, we reached the snow region. For some time we had been drawing nearer and nearer to the white masses that covered the heights; now they surrounded us on every side,

leaving, notwithstanding, our own path free as yet. But soon a snow-drift, blown by a sharp north-easter in a small strip across our road, gave us the first warning of peril, and half-an-hour later our mules were wading up to their knees in the white-yielding drift. Grim winter had drawn its pall over the slumbering mountains, and audacious human beings dared to sully it with their feet.

This day we stopped when we came to a little sunny space, where the snow had melted away from the northern side, leaving a few tolerably strong bushes visible, which afforded us the means of preparing some charcoal, and making snow-shoes. The mode of preparing the charcoal was simple enough. The peons broke down a quantity of bush, which they heaped into two good piles, and setting them on fire, allowed them to burn awhile, when they covered them up with ground; then, taking out the relics, they put them into a small bag, which they had brought from Mendoza for that purpose. The whole quantity obtained did not exceed ten or fifteen pounds, and I did not see how we could make this last for our whole journey, even with the finest weather, much less if we should be caught in a temporale, and detained for two or three weeks.

Our snow-shoes consisted of a couple of sheep-skins, wound tightly over our boots, to prevent the snow from reaching the leather and sticking to

it, while they also kept the feet warm. Under the sheep-skin was placed a piece of tanned leather, very much like a moccasin, and corresponding to the sole of a shoe, but fastened afterwards over the foot. But these appendages were merely tried to-day, being worn only for a short distance, to see how they would answer, as we could yet ride our mules, and we were to camp in the Punta de la Vaca, a kind of stone-hut, erected for the use of travellers.

While the others were busy on the ledge, I climbed about the hill, admiring the giant tracks of the condors, of which I found a great many vestiges; when my Chilean guide came up, carrying something in his poncho, and laughing, asked me to guess what he had got. I might have tried for a year, and should not have guessed right, for it was nothing less than ten or twelve pounds of the most delicious raisins. I inquired eagerly where he had found them, and he pointed to a narrow little gulch, which entered the main valley about half a mile below.

Raisins in the snow! Here was a phenomenon; and I must acknowledge that at first I really thought of the possibility of raisins having grown up here in summer, and becoming dried by the cold and snow. At any rate I would see myself the place where they had been found, and wading back that distance—and it was about as far again

as I had imagined—I came upon no natural vineyard, as I had almost expected, but on some twenty raisin-boxes, which, as I heard afterwards, a mule-drover, caught by a temporale just on the edge of the snow region, had thrown off here, and abandoned, flying for his life down the mountains. The winter setting in, had afterwards made it impossible to take them to the place of their destination, and they were left to the mercy of the weather, and of passing travellers, which my guide proved plainly enough, would be very equivocal. One of the peons, indeed, came down with me to fill his poncho; and when I remonstrated with him, replied that if he did not take the raisins, others would; and, another thing, he liked them very much.

Towards evening we had everything ready again, and moved about a mile farther up the ascent, the snow becoming so deep that, in some places, our mules could hardly get along. But at last we reached the place, "una casa," as the vaquiano said, though in truth it was a miserable stone hovel, into which we at home would not think of putting a horse in winter. And winter we found it here, where not even the dry points of bushes protruded from the deep snow, and not a piece of wood was to be had for a fire, and not a blade of grass for the poor mules, which had also been without a feed the previous

night, and would be the next night, on their return, if the vaquiano, who was to go back with them, could not reach the frontier house before night. Mules are really, after the camels of the deserts, the toughest animals on earth; but even they give up at last, over-burdened and over-worked by cruel man; and I met with numberless skeletons of mules along our path, where they had fallen down dead, the drivers taking off their packs and dividing them among the others, while the poor dying animals were left to their fate, when fatigue had not already killed.

That night we had to make our tea from snow —a miserable drink—the water being too far off, and too difficult to get at. Next morning, after a night certainly not very pleasant, we prepared for a snow-march. The guide having gone back with the mules, one peon took my saddle and saddle-bags tied well together on his back, and the other shouldered the provisions and coals; I myself had my rifle with a German hunting-pouch, in which I carried my ammunition, one of Wedgewood's manifold writers (by the bye, the most practicable writing materials a traveller can use on his way), and some clean linen and bread; and so we were all fixed, as the Yankees say, for a tramp. Each of us carried, besides this, a chair, and a very handy one too, though it had neither legs nor back, consisting, in fact, only of a piece of sheep-skin fastened to the

hind part of the belt, and hanging down behind, with the wool inward, nearly to the back part of the knee. On sitting down on the snow, this chair was of course always in the right place.

Leaving our hut that morning, and bending round a projecting point of a steep spur, which came down one of the dark towering clefts so sharp and straight that no snow could lie upon it, we saw the upper vale of these gigantic mountains stretching out before us far to the west; and there, where the first chain of mountains rose again, above this, lay the dividing ridge of the two oceans, the backbone of the world.

The view was as terrible as it was beautiful, and I stopped to look up a minute to the snowy peaks which thronged around me, forming one vast theatre of piled-up mountains.

My two peons—and they were two as dirty and rough-looking fellows as ever the Pampas had bred —profited by this rest, and coming down with their hands on their staffs, till their backs, with the load upon it, lay nearly horizontal; they rested in this position about a minute or two, singing, or rather mumbling, a low, monotonous song about their journey and God's help to it against temporales and avalanches.

Far in the distance, but not so far but what I thought we might reach it about twelve o'clock, we saw the first "casucha;" but travelling along

as quick as possible, it seemed to me, after a two hours' march, as if we had not advanced two hundred yards.

Towards mid-day we reached a snow-glide. The mountains here are too steep to admit of an avalanche as in Switzerland, but the snow, becoming too heavy in the upper regions, presses down on the lower layers, and sometimes the whole side of a mountain is cleared by a snow-glide in a few minutes, filling the valley, into which it shoots, for miles around with immense masses of snow. We had to clamber about for more than two hours to clear the first snow-glide; sometimes making our way over soft, sometimes over hard snow, and such tumbling down into hollows, slipping, and gliding backwards and forwards, on the cold slippery ground, was enough to tire any man, let him be as familiar with hardships as he may.

It was not till sun-down that we reached the first casucha. My peons were quite knocked up, and they had to rest before they could set about preparing any supper.

This was our first night in the real snow, the first camp in the very midst of the dangers of the passage. Should the weather only keep as it was three days longer, we should be out of the reach of temporales, and I could laugh at the perils we had encountered, as well as all the dreadful stories, which I had heard at Rio de Janeiro, at Buenos

Ayres, and even at Mendoza. A temporale, however, might happen at any moment; the very next morning the heavens might be clouded, and that is the only warning, in these mountains of the approach of a storm.

I doubt if there were ever in all the world a couple of such dirty nasty cooks as my two peons. So long as I knew them and enjoyed their company, I never saw them wash their hands or faces, and I really believe their mother might say the same of them. They attempted to persuade me that it was dangerous to wash one's self, coming into these latitudes; and when they saw me doing this hazardous thing with snow, as water was not to be had, they left the casucha in utter astonishment, and came out to look and laugh at me. Afterwards, when I showed them that my hands had not cracked from the use of the snow-water, as they had prophecied, they shrugged their shoulders, and said I had not got such a tender and soft skin as they had.

If I had not gone through so good a school in the Pampas, I should never have been able to live with these filthy fellows; but as it was, I took things coolly, knowing, moreover, that with the mountains I should get over this disagreeableness.

When we struck camp, the peons kindled a fire —and a very small one it was—with the charcoal which we had brought with us, boiled some water in a little iron pot, and commenced the preparation

of our caldo, or soup. One chopped up some charque, previously well punched between a couple of stones; the other cut up some onions as small as possible, and mixing the whole together in one corner of a poncho—which, to judge from its appearance, had certainly served that purpose for a very considerable time—added some pepper and salt, and transferred the mixture to a tolerably large cow-horn, which it half filled. Over this was poured hot or boiling water, when the soup was completed, and after stirring up with a knife, became ready for use. It was always presented, in a kind of rough politeness, first to me, and what I had left, the peons ate themselves, not unfrequently preparing a second mess in addition—for the caldo was their favourite dish.

The casuchas of the mountains are simple stone huts, built by the government to give shelter in winter to the correo, or to travellers, principally as a refuge from temporales. They are raised from twelve to sixteen feet from the ground, to prevent their being easily covered by drift-snow or snow-glides, and they are approached by a rough staircase, which leads up to them. They have, of course, no windows, and the only accommodation they afford, is a small chimney and some air-holes, which travellers, when they camp there, most commonly fill up, during their stay, with snow, and open again when they leave.

The floor of these casuchas is common earth, thrown upon stones similar to those composing the walls, and the ground is, therefore, cold and damp. Still they are a great accommodation to the traveller, and have saved many a life, which but for them would have been lost in the snow.

We were up again with daybreak, and after eating our caldo, made an early start. We had to cross on that forenoon two large snow-slips, and hard work it was to climb over those rough and yielding masses, the snow becoming deeper and deeper as we advanced. This would not have been of so much consequence, if the upper crust had been hard enough to bear us, but it was thin, and the soft snow was below, so that we had to raise our legs at every step as high as if we were climbing a staircase, while our feet no sooner touched the ground again, than they broke through and sank into the snow.

My compañeros had told me in the morning that we should reach hot water in the course of the day, but not understanding what they meant, I took no farther notice of it. Just after crossing the second snow-slip, however, I saw rising steam in the distance, and we reached a place where the tops of some bushes sticking out of the snow, showed a more luxuriant vegetation than farther below. A tedious walk over the long plain of soft snow, brought us to the bank of a stream, still the

Tucunjado, the course of which we had followed before, and here I was fully compensated for all I had undergone, in the really wonderful sight that met my eye.

Climbing over a layer of congealed snow, hardened, I imagine, by the falling steam of the hot spring, I saw right before me three jets of steaming water—the largest one several inches in diameter—shooting from the high, steep bank of the little stream, through the massive unyielding rock, and sending the steam high up into the clear atmosphere.

The sight was most beautiful: the steep bank and the boiling hot water, which shot hissing out, while flakes of snow lodged close around the edge of it, was a strange spectacle in such a region of frost.

High over the edge of the bank hung an immense quantity of snow, like a monstrous feather-bed, just ready to slip down by its own weight. The steam kept licking the lower parts of the heap, while the sharp south-wester, which blew through the dale, hardened the crust and retained the snow in its precarious position. The steam itself congealed and was transformed into icicles, which thus served to prop the snow like so many columns. Out of this self-formed winter palace rose the steaming vapour, and the warm sun shining upon it, changed it into myriads of glowing

pearls, tinged with the most radiant and beautiful colours of the rainbow.

I could with difficulty tear myself from this lovely sight, and should have liked very much to have slid down to the hot jet itself, to try its temperature, but this was impossible. The steep bank and the overhanging masses of ice and snow did not allow of my getting nearer than I was, unless I had spent many hours cutting a path, and it was too dangerous to risk a long stay in such a region, except from necessity.

In summer, the peons told me, visitors come to this spot from the Chilean side; and then, indeed, a residence between those picturesque mountain-peaks, in the very heart of the Cordilleras, must be charming.

Leaving the hot spring, we climbed another snow-glide, which must have come down very recently, and which took us several hours to cross. We then came to a more open part of the valley, and found harder snow—a great advantage in walking. Stepping along here at a brisk pace I startled a fox, and found a large number of the tracks of these animals coming out from a kind of hollow. Sportsmen are the most cruel beings on the face of this earth. A fox will not kill anything, except for its own use; but though the one I had started could be of no use to me, and could do no harm to any one, no sooner did I see it than my first thought

was murder, and I waited with mischievous joy, till it should come within shot.

My two companions, who seemed to feel interested in the sport, remained stationary, and Master Reynard came as carelessly up the slope as if he were only out for a quiet walk, when, judging the distance at about a hundred yards, just as he got the scent of us, but appeared to be uncertain as to the danger, I took a good and sure aim, and pulled the trigger. The gun went off, but to my utter astonishment the ball—one of the pointed slug-balls—struck the snow, as I plainly saw, some paces short of the fox; and Reynard, discovering that all was not right, scampered off, leaving me to fire again with as little effect as before. Having no idea what could be the matter with the gun, I went to the place where the fox had stood, and counting the steps in going, was surprised to find that what I had thought about a hundred yards, was really two hundred and sixty! so deceptive was the pure and transparent snow as to distance.

Indeed, on looking back, I saw that the spur of the mountain behind, on which lay the Punta del Vaca, appeared to be not farther off than two or three miles, though I knew the distance to be much greater. Then I reflected that if the sight was misled in such a way by the thin air, in judging the distance of objects so close, what an enormous space must lie between the

mountain-ridges, which really looked so far apart, and to what a height the mighty peaks must rise, when they were so gigantic even in appearance.

This also explained to me another fact, which hitherto I had not been able to comprehend. I had crossed, as I have already mentioned, several snow-glides which had shot down from the nearest sides of the rock, and covered distances which I now knew must be long, long miles, while the place on the rocks from which the snow had fallen had seemed in comparison only a few hundred yards in extent; but the illusion in this case was clear, and I now felt indeed the immense greatness of these mountains.

That evening we walked till nearly dark before we came in sight of the next casucha, where we intended to camp, a projecting rock having screened it from view; but turning round this, we saw the little place before us, and to our great joy a bright fire blazing out of the dark door-way. There was company then—human beings in the snow besides ourselves, and we should this night see other faces, hear other voices! We stepped out as fast as we could, and reaching the place just with dark, found within the Chilean correo, who, having profited by the fair weather, was on his way to Mendoza.

The first questions, from both sides, were, of course, after the road—how the snow was, whether

hard or soft, and how many snow-glides were to be encountered. The answers were satisfactory, though principally for us, as we had only one bad place to pass, and if the good weather lasted, should find on the edge of the snow, on the Chilean side, a drove of mules, the drivers of which had intended to attempt crossing over with their animals as an experiment; but having sent out some persons to examine the mountains, and their reports being unsatisfactory, they proposed to turn back and wait for better weather. If we pushed on, therefore, we might yet find them in one of the Chilean casuchas.

The correo congratulated us on having met with such fine weather, and told us that he had been locked up during this very winter in the last casucha we had passed, a dreadful temporale howling through the valleys, and filling them with snow, till they had eaten nearly all their provisions. In perfect despair they at length broke out from the cold walls, which had protected their lives several weeks, as soon as the storm had expended the greater part of its fury, to reach the lower region; and it was fortunate for them they did so, for the storm seemed only to have paused a little while, and they had hardly passed the Punta del Vaca, and left the snow behind them, when a new tornado commenced, driving the snow even down to where they fled, and sometimes upon their

path. "And here we are," the old fellow continued, "right in the very middle of it; if we get one of those cap-fulls now we should be in a scrape."

But the weather remained fine, the gnomes of the mountains were friendly to us, and the next day, the 18th of July, we reached and crossed the dividing ridge between two oceans—the highest pass of the Cordilleras—though it was a tedious job to climb up those steep, snow-covered banks, a portion of which the sun had also commenced thawing, softening the snow, and making the ground slippery and unsafe under foot.

But there was one powerful consolation for all these hardships, let them be as disagreeable as ever they might—this was the last height; once over this ridge, and the worst was passed, each step bringing us nearer to the lofty object we wished to obtain. At length I almost reached the summit, climbing with all the strength left me, and was going to sink in exhaustion, but should I rest once more when so near the point I had aimed at reaching the whole morning? No; setting my teeth, I rushed up, and the next minute stood with a feeling it would be impossible to describe, upon the backbone of a world. No mountain-ridge any longer obscured my gaze, and the eye saw more than it was able to comprehend. Far, far over there, the dim and misty horizon—the dark mass of the Pacific Ocean, while close to our

left, growing as it were from the very ridge upon which I was standing, the Tupingato, the highest peak of the Chilean Cordilleras, rose up between five and six thousand feet above us. The pass where we crossed is said to be thirteen thousand feet high, while the Tupingato reaches eighteen thousand feet above the surface of the ocean.

I wrapped my woollen blanket around me, for the wind blew sharply and coldly from the south-west, and throwing myself upon one of the mighty rocks, which have been softened by the storms of ages, and were now crumbling beneath the hand of time, my eye remained fixed a long, long while—not on the picturesque mountains of Chili, not upon the beautiful panorama of all those peaks and ridges that rose around me and seemed a wild ocean of gigantic waves, with their sharp outline thrown out by the misty atmosphere behind—no, but on those vast plains in the far east, whose boundaries were my own Atlantic Ocean; for there, far, far away I had left my home, and how or when should I behold again all that I had left there?

When I looked up again a large and powerful condor, the giant vulture of these massive heights, was soaring nearly within a stone's throw right above me, striking the air with its colossal wings, as if it belonged to the grandeur of the scene, but finding that the figure below it possessed life and

action, it turned its head, slowly sweeping away towards the sinking sun. I could have easily reached it with a bullet, but I should have thought it murder to shoot the bird at that moment.

But the sinking sun reminded me also of a night's shelter; my peons had passed me long before, scrambling down the steep snowy heights on the other side, and the next casucha lay yet in purple gloom far down between the rugged snow-peaks, which looked up to me menacingly from below—and what would I not have given to stay another hour on this spot; but there was no joking with this very height, and afterwards I heard that we had hit on the most fortunate moment to cross it, for nearly always a perfect gale howls here over the ridge, and, in fact, the highest part of the mountain was swept as clean of snow as storm and hurricane could do it—old Boreas keeps his drawing-room in first-rate order.

Now, then, to begin my descent! and any one who ever went down a steep hill after a tedious day's march, will be able to judge what I felt, at gliding and slipping down the Cordilleras, after having, without more than half-an-hour's rest, toiled up to their summits the whole day. I had, however, strained my nerves too much during the last few days, and after an hour's march such a peculiar kind of sickness overcame me that I had to throw myself down upon the ground

several times to rest and gain some strength, cooling my lips at the same time with handfuls of snow. At such moments my head swam, and I felt sick; but there was no help for it, I had to go on, for I could not stop in the snow, and I scrambled up again after an attack, to continue my journey with fresh vigour.

This hill was tremendously steep, the whole descent being a succession of uninterrupted leaps from rocks about three and four feet high, or gliding down ravines sometimes fifty or a hundred feet long. We did not reach the first casucha till dark; but what a dreadful place to stop in! The snow reached up to the very entrance of the little low hut, which was inside as dirty as men and beasts, during a number of years, could have made it; and to increase the beauties of the place, a mule brought up here by the very muleteers, I believe, who had been examining the path to see if they could cross the mountains with their animals, had died right before the door of the casucha—you had to step over it if you wanted to enter the low and dark room—and the powerful beak of some condor had been tearing at it, as long as it had been warm, I expect, for now even a sledge-hammer would have made very little impression upon it. And we must stay all night here?—could this be a habitation for human beings? But there was no choice left; the next casucha was a whole legua farther, and

how would we have been able to pick our road along the dangerous cliffs and down steep banks, over the dazzling snow, in the dark? No, we were forced to stop in the disgusting place; my only consolation being now a cup of hot tea, or even a hornful of caldo, I really did not care which; so I threw my blankets and things into the corner that looked least dirty, though I hardly believe a horse would have lain down in such a spot, and called the peons to kindle a fire.

But even this comfort was not afforded me: the rascals, that they might not be obliged to carry the coals over the steep mountain-ridge, had burnt every particle the previous night, and we were now in the midst of snow without being able to kindle the least fire even to boil some water—nothing but the cold, dirty, stone-walls, and the dead mule lying before the door. There was a comfortable home for a man; but what good would grumbling do? so with a hearty curse upon the lazy fellows, who were chewing in perfect self-contentment some of the stone-hard charque, I swallowed a mouthful of it myself, took a dram out of a little bottle which the Italian apothecary in Mendoza had filled for me with some excellent bitters, rolled myself up in my blanket and poncho and threw myself on the cold and damp ground.

Next morning I was up long before daylight. There was one comfort in our situation, that we had

not to wait in this dreadful hole for breakfast; so up I jumped, fastened the sheep-skin again over my boots, rolled up my blanket and threw it over my shoulders, and wrapping the poncho around me, and stepping over the carcass of the mule, I drew a deep breath, for the cold but pure morning air fanned my face, and my feet rested on the clean snow—what a contrast with the hole I had just left.

But when I came out into the mountains this morning upon the path we had to follow down the gulches and steeps, I saw how dangerous, even impossible, it would have been for us to travel last night in the dark, when we came to places we could hardly cross in broad daylight. The mountain-slopes were all steep and precipitous, covered, of course, with many feet of snow and crusted by the cold south-wester, which blew with bitter sharpness through the narrow chasms, with a thin sheet of ice, over which a fine snow-dust, like a thin, icy mist, was drifting, in low transparent clouds. We had to travel along these cliffs and slopes, and one place in particular really seemed as if impossible to cross. It was the steep slope of a real mountain, for mountain high it rose to our left, while it went at an angle of about sixty degrees far, far down to a bluish, dark chasm. If the foot slipped here, all escape was out of the question, for smooth as a mirror, without the least bush, or shrub or even

elevation, it sloped down to the deep valley, where most certainly hundreds of feet of drifted snow would have buried the unhappy traveller for ever.

It was also impossible to go round this place—we had to face it; and my peons told me the old correo had passed it also, though perhaps a little higher up or farther below, which did not make the least difference; so I had to take out my large bowie-knife, and going before, cut or hack with it small holes in the snow, or rather ice, to put our feet in. The peons followed slowly and carefully, setting their feet with great attention exactly in my tracks; and so we had to advance at least a quarter of a mile. The bank was so steep, at the same time, that when standing upright we could touch the snow with our outstretched hands, each step endangering life and limbs, but also diminishing the danger; and after we had passed this place, the worst was over. We came to some other such slopes, equally steep and dangerous perhaps, but not so long; and reaching the mountain-stream again after about three hours' march, we had, at least for a while, no more cliffs and chasms to threaten us with destruction at the first false step.

With the first water we also reached a casucha, which, on the Chilean side, are only one legua apart, while the distance between them on the eastern side of the Cordilleras is sometimes nearly three leguas. The small springs, of which

we had crossed and followed several that day, collected here again into a larger mountain-stream, the Puente. Farther and farther we followed it down into the deeper valley, which widened here, and, in fact, already displayed some places free from snow; and which brought us, some time in the afternoon, to the next casucha, and with it to a hard and rocky path, upon which a small troop of mules was camping. From here, as I soon learned, the road was passable for mules, though with some disagreeable places; and glad enough I was to find the mules were returning that same evening to the low lands, because they had tried to pass, but found it impossible. I made a bargain with the leader of the troop to take me and my things to Santa Rosa, the first little place in the valley, where I had to get horses again from my old vaquiano's father. But here we rested first—here all the threatened dangers of the Cordilleras, of snow-drifts and temporales, were past; Pampas and snow-locked mountains lay behind me; and with the most pleasant feeling in the world, I threw myself here for the first time again, except on the very top of the mountains, upon the bare and naked ground, on which only a few blades of wiry grass grew; a hot cup of coffee being a kind of recompense for past sorrows and hardships.

Down, down we went from here, following the

course of the Puente, which had become a large and wild mountain-stream—and I had known it as a child—took a slight rest towards evening close to the first hut we reached, where a Chilean had made his home in one of the wildest, but at the same time most picturesque mountain-gulches, and started just before dark again; for my compañeros wanted to get to a good grassy place, and have some food for their nearly-starved mules.

Here I tasted, for the first time, a genuine Chilean dinner, consisting of a rather primitive mess. Some coarse but very sweet wheat-flour was put into a horn, scraped and kept clean, water poured over it, and the mixture stirred up with a little stick—and it was a luxury to have even little sticks—into a thin drinkable mush. I looked at the beverage or nourishment, whichever I might call it, at first rather suspiciously; but either my taste had been spoiled in the mountains, or else it was really good: it seemed most excellent to me, and I emptied a whole horn. An excellent onion, which grows in Chili, with some red pepper, completed my meal; and after dinner I was able to lie down again under a tree, were it ever so small, and upon the grass, were it ever so thin; it was tree and grass, and there was a sweet sound even in the name of the things.

When we started again, however, our dangers

or hardships were not all passed—in fact, we had not even left the snow—for we had to cross several large masses, which not only caused our passage to be very tedious, but also showed that we might yet be overwhelmed by avalanches; but this was nothing, on we went—even the last ravine now lay behind us—and following a narrow and steep path in perfect darkness, where the Puente foamed, as it seemed, beneath the feet of our mules; and though a single false step would have hurled me down, a lifeless corpse, upon the sharp rocks of the valley, I felt so secure that I even slept in the saddle.

In the night we stopped at some place—I do not know where, and in fact cared less; it was pitch dark—and without inquiring if there was a house or habitation in the neighbourhood, I slipped down from the saddle, wrapped myself up in my blanket, and slept on the very spot my foot had touched on leaving the stirrup. Next morning, up with daylight again: it was a raw morning. When I awoke, the mule, ready saddled, was brought up to me. I got up—from the mule upon the ground, from the ground upon the mule. It was a miserable life; but every minute I drew nearer my place of destination, and ought not to grumble. The wind came up freezingly through the mountain-gulch. I drew my poncho close around me, and thought of the last night's dream—a dream of

home, of wife and child; and the rougher, the more unfriendly the outer world appeared to me, the more I gave myself up to the sweet thought.

The morning was raw and cold; a damp mist was spread over the valley, hardly allowing us to distinguish the path upon which we travelled for ten or fifteen paces ahead. Farther and farther down into the valley we rode; and with half-closed eyelids, I sate in my saddle with only sufficient consciousness of the present to keep my balance in the stirrups.

Dogs barked—I thought I heard the merry laugh of children's voices; I looked up, and grasping the reins of my mule, I really did not know the first moment if I was awake or still dreaming. Had I really come from out the iron frost only yesterday, at times up to the waist in snow, or climbing over icy heights, where neither tree nor shrub broke the monotonous solitude of snow and towering rock—and now?

Right before me I saw a peaceful cleanly cabin, nearly hidden in the friendly shade of thick green bushes. Close to the hut a perfect thicket of dark-leafed orange-trees, with their golden fruit peeping everywhere out; rose-trees covered with budding flowers; peach-trees loaded with their soft sweet blossoms; and wherever the astonished eye turned, blooming bushes and shrubs, and the sweet verdure of the fertile slopes and valleys.

Everything had changed—as if the wand of a magician had struck the ground, and melted winter's icy power into blossom and waving fruit-laden branches—as if I myself had gained new power and life, I felt the warm spring-time gushing through my veins; and shaking off every thought of exhaustion or weakness, I dug my spurs into my rather astonished mule, and galloped, with joy and pleasure thrilling in my heart, on through the valley.

Chili had opened her hospitable arms to receive us—every inch of soil seemed cultivated—the numerous mule-droves we met gave evidence of the busy communication in these parts. Everywhere oranges and blooming peach and apple-trees, in whose shade nice and cleanly houses lay, greeted our sight; the fields and gardens were surrounded by trimly-kept hedges or stone fences, and the springs and water-streams, led to give moisture to the more arid districts, revealed the industry of an agricultural people. Every step showed more and more that we had left that country where death and signs of blood met the sight wherever the weary eye turned, and where animal nourishment made man the blood-thirsty being he showed himself, while here milder habits and milder food softened even the nature of the inhabitants, and spread peace and blessings around.

At mid-day we reached Santa Rosa, where I was

to get fresh horses. Here also the last peon, whom I had taken with me, left me in charge of my old guide's brother, who went with me to Valparaiso to receive there the stipulated five ounces, after delivering me in good condition at the Puerto.

On the same evening, and now on the backs of two lively horses, we passed the friendly little town of San Felipe, with its broad regular streets, low-roofed houses, and enclosed gardens, its flowery hedges and fruit-loaded orange groves. Even before the magistrate's house stood two beautiful palms, the first—and, in fact, the only ones—I saw in Chili, which endowed the whole scenery with a warm tropical character; the natives themselves had something peculiar to distinguish them from those of the neighbouring republic. They also wore the poncho but much shorter and of course not of the same bright red colours; they also galloped their horses, but not at such a break-neck speed as the Argentines always do, not caring a straw if the horse breaks down as soon as it reaches the spot the rider wants to go to. The Chilean farmer not unfrequently even trots, a thing I only saw on the other side of the Cordilleras in Buenos Ayres itself, where horsemen were not allowed to gallop.

Riding appointments also—saddle, spur and bridle, but especially stirrup—are very different from the Argentine. The guacho of the Pampas

uses the smallest stirrup imaginable, and very frequently none at all, having only a small piece of wood or bone tied to the stirrup-leather, passing between his two largest toes, which rest upon a kind of knot or knob of the same character; but the Chilean stirrup, on the contrary, looks in comparison to the other like the box of a waggon-wheel—round, clumsy, and cut out of a single piece of wood, with only a hollow to put the foot in. The spurs of the Chileans are something like the Argentine in weight and shape, but the wheel is about three and a half to four inches in diameter and guarded with spikes close together, like the beams of a painted sun; while the Argentine spurs, with only six single thorns or points, act like so many knives upon the sides of the poor horses. The Chilean saddle is also covered sometimes with six or eight sheep-skins, affording the rider, with the high back and pommel, a tolerably secure but rather clumsy seat.

We overtook a great many caravans to-day, which looked peculiar enough with their singular riding-gear, and the riders and even loads, for many of them were taking wine to town in leather bags, prepared out of the hide of some animals, I think principally goats.

That night we stayed in one of the little Chilean huts, but I found them far different from the Argentine hovels; though very poor, there was a

great deal more comfort in them, and no comparison in cleanliness; they had immeasurably the advantage over all their eastern neighbours, very few excepted. Next morning at daylight we were up again; a singular impatience possessed me, a kind of foreboding that I should miss my ship if I did not hurry on. The whole day we passed, sometimes through well-cultivated land, and on approaching again the little mountain-stream which had formed this valley, we entered a perfect wilderness of pebbles. They were sometimes of two and three hundred pounds weight, which the mad current had rolled down with it, and on flooding the bottoms threw the rocky seed all over the land, many a mile wide. These waters must have a dreadful force when they bring the melting snow down from the mountains, sweeping along with them everything that meets them in their wild and reckless career.

The country itself was by no means such as I had expected to find here; with the exception of some cactus, I saw hardly any vegetation, except in the valleys, the hills being undulating and naked, like the giant waves of some old petrified ocean, and overgrown with a thin crop of grass. Every hill we reached, I hoped to get in sight of the Pacific, and every hill only showed the reflection of exactly such an one as we had just scaled.

We passed through a nice little town about

mid-day—Guillota, with fertile fields and gardens, and, as I everywhere saw, an industrious population. But it became dark, and we had not yet seen Valparaiso, nor the signs of a larger town even, and we crossed hill after hill, our horses being dead beat at last, and mine hardly able to move. My guide was going to stop all night at every hut we came to—he told me the horses could go no farther—but I had no rest; if he stopped, I told him I should go on foot, but Valparaiso I would reach that night. And on we travelled again, leading the horses up hill for their, and down hill for our accommodation. Now we saw a bright light right before us, like a meteor—what was that?—the lighthouse of El Puerto my compañero said, so we had at last reached the neighbourhood of the sea; but the sea itself was invisible, the darkness could have been cut with a knife.

Next we came, as we saw sometimes when we ran right against them, to some shrubs and thickets which the road wound through—and how the horses kept the road, I do not know; the path also turned downwards, some lights were visible, and we had to cross now—and we must be near the shore, for I could plainly hear the breakers—the sandy bed of a deep water-course, very probably the same stream I had followed from the top of the Cordilleras. Down our horses went into the water—I do not

know how deep, in fact I did not care, I was perfectly worn out, and only recollect I held up my gun over my head, to keep that dry. On—on, I thought, we should never reach Valparaiso, my horse could no longer carry me, crossing the water had done for it, and wet as I was, I had to lead it. At last, we reached the outskirts of the port; it was past nine o'clock, the people had shut their houses, and gone to bed, and a darkness enfolded us, such as I had never seen before.

And what could I have done to-night with my vessel? Nothing at all. But the 'Talisman' could not leave the harbour now, at least, till to-morrow morning, and with daybreak I was sure to be on the landing. So I let my guide go ahead, and choose a house for us to stay in all night—what did I care about the place, if I could only lie down and go to sleep? I was tired to death.

CHAPTER X.

VALPARAISO AND CHILI.

Do not ask me for a description of that night! It was the conclusion of all my hardships in Chili, it is true, but also as disgusting as any I had yet passed. However, I shall never forget "Donna Beatriz," as she was called, pulling out of some corner an old frying-pan, that had rested there, I will not even guess how long. She was going to fry some eggs, and discovering in it an old layer of grease, slapped the pan without much ado upon the fire, and put the eggs on top of the dissolving fat. I saw all this in a half-dream, in a kind of stupor, and acted accordingly.

On inquiring here about the vessels in the harbour, none of the Chileans could give me any satisfactory answer; but at daybreak next morning—and I slept during the night in some corner upon an old mat—I was up, and at the landing. A great many vessels lay in the bay, but they were

nearly all too far off to distinguish, even to what class they belonged. No breeze was stirring, however, and if the 'Talisman' had not left, I was tolerably sure of getting on board; there was not much danger now of her sailing without me.

Hardly anybody seemed as yet stirring; it was Sunday, and I always hate to come to a strange place on a Sunday morning—you can find nobody, you can buy nothing, and even in a traveller's dress people look at you, and wonder where you come from; for they have nothing else to do on that day. And how much more so was this the case with me to-day, for never in my life had my dress been in a worse state than at present, and it had been in very bad ones. Dear reader, I had been twenty-four days in the saddle nearly at a stretch, seventeen days a break-neck gallop nearly all the time; travelling through the snow, climbing and sliding, was not the sort of thing to improve my garments, and I had only that one suit with me—yes, I might well say, I *had* had that one suit, for to be candid, they no longer existed, except piecemeal; even the stout leather of my high water-boots had been rubbed through on the sides, and at the same time there had been no possibility of getting ready-made clothing on the way, except cheripaws, and I could not walk in those clumsy things.

Clean linen I had, of course, taken with me,

but nothing else, not a spare stick in case of necessity, my only safeguard being the long Argentine poncho, which covered all. And I looked pleasant in it, scarlet of course being the predominant colour, with a blood-red silk kerchief, tied loosely over the poncho round my neck, Argentine fashion. My hat also rather the worse for wear—in former times a fine, broad-brimmed black felt sombrero—but the brim had been torn off, or opened at least close to the head nearly all round, by the continued flapping up and down, while galloping, and set me off to the best advantage. Add to this the sunburnt face, hair and beard not shorn—I forgot when; and no wonder the dogs barked at me, when they saw me come down the street in my red and shining brightness. There are a countless number of unowned dogs in the streets of Valparaiso, and I really do not know how I should have kept them at bay much longer; for hearing the barking they came flocking in from all the other streets, and I had in fact already drawn my knife, when a young peon passing by, and seeing my difficulty, stepped kindly up, and swung his arm round his head, as if he was whirling a lasso. The nearest caught the alarm, and they scampered down the street after two or three had commenced running. The dogs in Valparaiso have all rather a bad conscience, and fear the lasso extremely; so those dogs which were coming down the street to

the rescue, hardly saw the others flying, before they turned tail themselves, without even asking what had been the matter.

I got rid of the dogs, but still it was most disagreeable to feel as if every one was staring at you behind. But, away with despair! even if I had missed the ship, I should find my trunk here, and could soon have dry and whole clothing again. I also had money at some merchant's in town, and being of a disposition to take things lightly, I walked down to the landing again, where I saw a European-looking gentleman crossing the street; he looked at the same time like an American, and was in fact the landlord of the Star Hotel, as I afterwards found, and could give me all the information I wanted.

"Did he know the 'Talisman'?—Why, nearly all the passengers on board had dined, and the captain and supercargo stayed with him as long as they were on shore."

"Had?—so the 'Talisman' was gone!"

"Gone? Of course, yesterday afternoon, about five o'clock. She was still in the harbour."

Yesterday afternoon, while I was toiling over those never-ending monotonous hills, the 'Talisman' had left her anchorage. If it had been daylight, I could not have helped seeing her from the top of the last hills, with all sails set, beating out with a light northern breeze towards

[illegible] ... [illegible] ... [illegible] ... [

answered; and calling directly one of his young men who lived in the same house, asked him if the 'Talisman' had left any trunk or luggage for one of the passengers in the store or custom-house —not a thing, in spite of the captain and the supercargo's promise, they had not landed the least article for me; and all I called my own in this part of the world, all that I wanted in linen and clothing, all that I needed to continue my journey with only something like comfort, was on its way to blessed California, going along at this moment, who knew at how many knots an hour?

There was most certainly no joke in the matter, but I could not help myself, I had to laugh right out when I heard the news; and Mr. Fehrmann also, to whom I mentioned my name, and gave the outlines of my voyage in a few words, which he had also heard spoken of by the supercargo, laughed at first—and I would like to have seen the man who could have remained serious—but offered me at the same time, with the greatest and most friendly hospitality, his house as a residence during the time I should be obliged to stop at Valparaiso, which I accepted as frankly as it was offered, finding myself soon afterwards not merely introduced into his house, but also into his family, as if I had belonged to it from earliest childhood.

But my clothing was in such a desperate state,

that I had really to borrow only the most necessary articles, before I could go round the town and buy what I needed.

And so everything turned out well, and next morning I felt perfectly reconciled with my situation; I could now rest after my tedious journey, see new and interesting things, and continue my voyage when the 'Reform' came in from Bremen. She was to have started about four weeks after us, and not touch at Rio, but making a direct passage to Valparaiso, take in provisions there, and leave directly again for San Francisco.

Valparaiso, one of the most important towns on the Pacific Ocean, has been too often described for me to weary the English reader with the repetition of old and most certainly known accounts; I will give him only the outlines, and what I saw interesting in the place. He will find much, I hope, that is amusing.

Chili is a fertile and in many parts well-cultivated land, exporting quantities of grain, flour, and vegetables to foreign states, now principally to California and Australia, the people being, for a southern state at least, and without slave work, industrious enough. But besides the fertile soil, its mines are exceedingly rich, and the silver and copper mines have yielded extraordinary profits. The state also protects this branch of business, I might say before all others. Thus, for instance,

the discoverer of a new mine, no matter whose land the ore may be found on, has the right of possession over the place, and the value of it cannot be fixed by the former owner, but the state determines the price itself for the land, not according to the richness of the ore, but to that of the soil itself, if the land were converted to agricultural purposes; even more, if the discoverer of the ore, in working his mine, requires wood and water, and is prevented from obtaining them through the other property of the former owner surrounding him, the latter is obliged to furnish him with both, at a price government fixes.

Government, at the same time, desires and supports immigration of Europeans, principally Germans for agriculture; and during my residence at Valparaiso several German families who wanted to move over to Valdivia, and could not find a vessel for that port, after waiting a good while at Valparaiso, were sent down by government in a little man-of-war brig, the 'Condor'—passage free, though they had to find their own provisions—to the place of their destination.

The climate is most excellent, as no part of the country lies in a tropical latitude; the rainy season has cool and pleasant nights, to give the blood some rest and keep it from being always in a boiling state. It agrees also very well with Europeans, and those of my countrymen I spoke to

here—and nearly all were from the most northern parts of Germany, knew nothing at all of sickness, at least originating in the climate.

The town itself consists of two distinct parts—the Spanish and European—I may almost say the English part, for I believe there are more English merchants in Valparaiso than other foreign houses, though the Germans have also many large houses here, and some of the best firms in Valparaiso are German. The foreign part of the town is built nearest to the water, and consists, in spite of the earthquakes which not unfrequently attack this part of the world, of a great many two or three storied houses, while the Chileans prefer lower buildings. The foreign part has also nothing extraordinary in its character, you see houses exactly like them all over the world, in all parts and ports; but the Chilean part is so much more interesting, and principally those little buildings which form a kind of suburb, running along the steep hills, and sometimes stuck up alongside a perfect wall, just enough of the fore part resting upon hard ground to give the one end of the beam a footing, while the other end, not twelve feet long, stands on higher posts, to keep it horizontal. The hills, cut up here, in fact, by a quantity of steep gulches, called quebradas, are the most unhandy places to build a town on imaginable; but the Chileans do not care about that, build they

must, and where the banks are not really perpendicular, or even overhanging—ay, where they only get a chance of shoving a beam in—there they stick it, and there they have some house or other.

Valparaiso has been at all times a busy place; but at present, with the gold excitement spreading over the world, and just on the very spot to form a watering station for all those vessels which had weathered the dangerous Cape, it was perfectly crowded with vessels; and through the demand, provisions, and especially fruit, rose to an enormous price. Boarding and lodging also rose proportionately, and English, American, French, aud Italians did their best in erecting new hotels and *cafés*. Just at the landing, the eye was greeted by a rather uninviting California Chop-house, having a large sign-board with giant letters. The Hole in the Wall came next, also right in front of the landing, and both of them kept by Americans. The Golden Lion, a common dram-shop, also tried to attract boats, by the sign stuck out towards the water. Then the Star Hotel, the Ship Hotel, a new one, established by a Belgian, and affording very good accommodations. Also a good Spanish Hotel, the Chilean House, the European, the Victoria Hotel, the Hôtel de France—in short, hotels wherever you looked, and making money as fast as they could take it in. The price for

boarding and lodging was at that time one and a half dollars per day.

But we will return here again after awhile, and I should like to take the reader with me on a short walk through town.

It is still very early yet, when we pass down the broad street that leads towards the eastern part of the city—the walk is cool and shady, and over the garden walls fruit-laden orange-trees nod and shake their rustling dew upon the pavement. Pavement! what singular ornaments are these in the side-walks? Stars and crosses laid out with little round pebbles and bones—what an odd idea, to pave streets with bones!—yes, dear reader, and especially when they are human bones. Those stars and crosses are composed of the carpus and tarsus, wrist and ankle-bones, of their former masters, the Spaniards. They carried their hostility against the conquered enemy so far, as even not to be satisfied with having them dead, under ground, but also kept some part of them above ground to stamp their heel upon. A first-rate lesson this though, for all severe masters, if they will only profit by it, while there is time.

The Chileans hated the Spaniards so much—ay, even hate them now—that they will never permit anybody to say they talk Spanish. "No, Señor," they answer, "ablamos castellano."

But we will proceed: it is not our fault that

they here dishonour the bones of the dead—fanaticism has caused it; and Mephistopholes, whose particular delight it is to confound belief and unbelief in this world, has caused that to be honoured in one part of the little ant-hill we call the earth, which they trample under foot in the other.

We now reach the farther end of town. High garden walls alternate with low Spanish huts and houses; there are some Norfolk pines, extending their slender and graceful branches over the high stone fence, and not far from them a quantity of little coffee-tables, spread with a white clean napkin, invite the guassos coming from the country to take their frugal breakfast. What a blessing it is not to be tormented any longer by that dreadful maté, though it is drunk here also, but by no means to such an extent as on the other side of the Cordilleras.

What women are those we meet, in a coarse black woollen dress, a cloth of the same stuff thrown over their heads, so as only to leave a part of the forehead and the eyes free, but whose fingers, while holding the cloth together, reveal a transparent whiteness, and sparkle with costly rings—are they penitents? I thought so at first; but I soon learnt this was the church dress of the Señoras and Señoritas. The ladies had worn, as I was told, only a little while before, such an extraordinary display of jewels and other ornaments,

silks and velvet, that the holy padres—and I honour them for it—thought it necessary to stop such a luxury in a place where they ought to have come only to pray to their God, and not to show all the neighbours their finery; and how many thousands of our ladies in England, France, Germany, and, in fact, through all the civilized states of the world, do exactly the very same thing, pretending not to be able to do without their weekly or daily worship, though, in fact, only to have the opportunity of displaying a new bonnet or dress. We should all be equal before God; and as we pray, "lead us not into temptation," we should also not lead others into it, by kneeling right before their very eyes in some new finery, just brought home from the dressmaker's or milliner's. No, the black cloth covers all this; and the hearts that beat under it, you may think, can have no other thoughts but of their God. No, dear reader, you are mistaken there; many a rendezvous takes place even beneath that black cover, even in that holy place; but dress cannot alter that, and even if they were clothed in sackcloth, the heart would beat under it still.

A little farther on we met a chain-gang—prisoners of all climes and nations cleaning the street, the dark scowl of the Chilean bravo by the side of the open and even daring look of the gentleman guasso, in his common poncho and dress, though

he wears fine linen. His hand had been rather too quick in a quarrel at grasping the knife—his memory was shorter than his patience; and he must now suffer for it a short time, but in irons with the rest, amidst felons and thieves of every description. But he knows his time will soon expire, and he may then gallop on his prancing steed through the streets he is now forced to sweep with chained hands.

Only a little farther on, the tiny water-course comes foaming and gushing down the narrow ravine from the hills. Look at that glittering and sparkling stuff at the bottom, like golden specks strewn over a bed of sand. It is only mica, though many a gold-searching Californian has been deceived by the brightness of the worthless stuff, and carried bags of it with him, much to the amusement of his companions, and very much to his own discomfiture. But there is gold in these hills, notwithstanding, and after very heavy rains, the peons wash gold even in the mouth of the streams that pour through the streets of Valparaiso, and are able to earn about half-a-dollar a day at it.

But we must turn back. The streets become more lively, and there by the canal they seem to have even a horse-race; but they are only training some horses for the first leap at the bar. Let us stop here a minute.

In Chili they nearly always run their horses very short distances, even one or two hundred yards, and the first leap—for the horse is trained not to lose a single second after the signal is given—must be, in most cases, decisive. The horses, therefore, are taught to stand, when ready to start, with their feet as close together as goats stand upon a small rock, and when the signal for the horses to start is given, the whole weight of the animals, like the sinew on the bent bow, is thrown forward in readiness to aid the first leap.

The Chilean horse is a lively and active little animal, and capable of far more exertion than you may think at first sight. The Chilean nearly always gallops, but not at such a wild speed as the Argentine; he thinks more of horseflesh, and pays more attention to his animals than the former; but we should not say *more*, for the Argentine does not attend to them at all.

Nearly all the Chileans carry the lasso on their saddles, and have the same dexterity in using it as their eastern neighbours. The children commence in their earliest youth practising with it, and you can see nearly everywhere little boys running about with thin lassos of twine, and catching chickens or little dogs, even trying their skill once in a while on a larger one; but this is a rather hazardous experiment, as the Chilean dogs, as soon as they feel something round their necks—for they

live day and night in the greatest fear of this instrument—fly for their lives, not unfrequently carrying the little daring, but now screaming boy with them a long way through the street, till the line breaks, or somebody else comes to the rescue. Even the horse-police always carry the lasso on the back part of their saddles, and they sometimes use them also in broad daylight, if they want to catch anybody.

There is a law in Valparaiso against galloping through the streets, and a most excellent law it is too, for nobody would be safe a minute, otherwise, from being run over, whenever he turned a corner; but the strangers who came here, did not agree with it at all, especially the Americans; and besides that, all seamen in particular fight hand and foot against it. If they get on board of a horse, they do not want to log two or three knots; they must also have, of course, a pair of those large Chilean spurs, if they only mean to go a couple of miles on a pleasure trip, and therefore are in a continual quarrel with the police—always ending, though, to their disadvantage, sometimes with walking home, and paying a fine besides. A vessel came in not long before, from Baltimore, and some of the passengers, of course, must go right in the very first hour to a livery stable (and you see the sign-boards with a horse and "livery stable" painted to the right and left all over the town) and each hire a

horse for a trip into the interior. The man who let the horses to them, acquainted them of course with the laws, and warned them not to gallop so long as they were in the streets; but what did they care? the man only told them this, they fancied, not to have his horses ridden hard, and digging their spurs in, away they went. But they had hardly passed the first corner, the stable-boy looking after them with a grin—for he knew the consequences—when they heard the call of the first policeman. Three of the horses being used to this cry, came suddenly to a dead halt, nearly throwing two of their riders over their heads, and were far too well satisfied with the law itself, to be induced, either by whip or spur, to move a step, till the police-officer came up, and had a chance of giving the riders a fair warning; but the fourth, a young, lively, and rather wild animal, with a good rider upon its back, and the sharp wheel of the spur in its side, never stopped, but did its utmost to get out of harm's way as soon as possible.

The police-officer called again, and seeing it was no use, also spurred his horse, and the chase began. The American, a Green Mountain boy, who had ridden many a Saturday night, at a wilder speed than this, perhaps, and not fearing these "Spanjoles," as he called them, was satisfied with having such a good horse under him, and cared little about the rest. On they went, the people getting

out of the way, and looking after the wild, but not uncommon chase, though rather astonished at seeing a foreigner ride so well. But even the policeman found out at last that he should not overtake him till they got out of town, and not wishing to leave his station so far, he gave a last warning and loosened his lasso. On seeing that was not obeyed, he whirled the dangerous weapon a couple of times round his head, and while the noose darted off, and his own animal reared back, the astonished Green Mountain boy was suddenly caught round the arms and jerked somewhere, he did not know where, till he recovered from the fall, and found himself, bruised all over, in the hands of the police, and obliged to pay a certain amount of dollars and reals for the pleasure.

Besides the horses, there are also cabs in town for the accommodation of the public, much like ours, but with their horses put in rather differently. The off-horse runs in the same way, but the other is only fastened to his saddle-girt, with a strong piece of leather, and pulls at the same iron ring that holds the end of the lasso.

As early as you may pass through the streets of Valparaiso, you hear music—the sounds of the guitar are sure to be alive in some house or other. The Chilean is, at the same time, social before every other nation; and should I ever choose another country for my home, after having seen

nearly the whole world, it would be Chili. Americans and English—as hospitable and kind-hearted as they may be—are cold in their exterior: a stranger above all must be introduced to them first, and even afterwards it seems a very difficult thing for him to be upon a really friendly footing with anybody; let them pay as many visits as they will to their neighbour, they will, with very few exceptions, always remain strangers—they have not the gift for a really social life.

It is different with the Chileans. If you come amongst them a perfect stranger, without being acquainted with a single one, without a letter of introduction, in which state you would be among English and Americans, but principally among the former—if you did not need their immediate help; and English and Americans will never deny that—as if on a desert island in some ocean—you may try on every side, but give it up at last in despair. The Chilean, on the contrary, as soon as he finds out you are a respectable man, comes himself to call on you, and you are from the first minute on such a footing in his house, as if you had been a visitor for years.

A passenger afterwards came with the 'Reform,' who intended to stay a longer time in Valparaiso, and rented a little room for himself, though he

could not even speak Spanish at that time properly; but he had only been a few days in his lodgings, and his neighbours had heard he was a perfect stranger and a gentleman, when they sent over to him, inviting him into their families, and received and treated him with the greatest kindness.

But to return to the landing. What a crowd there is round the place! English sailors, from a man-of-war, just returned from California, have had a fight on the landing; and hearing soldiers coming down the street, and not willing to get acquainted with the Chilean calabozo, they make a rush to their boat, with which they have just landed coals, to get off to their ship. Hundreds of peons who were standing idling upon the plaza, to wait for work, and perhaps not over anxious to get it, laughed at the hurry which the sailors, who were just a minute before raving mad, displayed; and Jack, not liking to be laughed at, but seeing the multitude, and hearing the music of the approaching soldiers, pushed out. The sailors had hardly left the landing, while the peons were flocking in swarms round the stairs, laughing at them in their harmless way, when they found in their long-boat pieces of the coal carried on shore, and used them as a missile, astonishing the natives not a little by throwing stones from out of the sea, right amongst them, and hitting

those which had least expected it. But while all of them wanted to have a throw, they did not move forward with their boat, and the Chileans, rushed back to some heaps of pebbles opportunely standing on the landing, and gathering them up in their hats and ponchos, they returned to the fight, and the sailors found, rather too late, that they had stirred up a hornets' nest. Four of them immediately caught up their oars, but one stout fellow, the very picture of an old English tar, stood up on one of the hindmost thwarts, and turned his broad front daringly to the Chileans, and as he had no coals left to return the thickly-flying missiles, he abused them in the loudest and most insulting language, calling them blackguards, &c., and now and then—to give them a taste in their own language—carachos and infernal Spanjoles.

A little midshipman was in the boat, when the sailors rushed in and enjoyed the sport, as it seemed, exceedingly, as long as the sailors only threw from the boat, but was rather taken aback when the peons returned it in such a liberal manner. So, half-laughing, but also a little careful of his own person, he stationed himself just behind the stout sailor, dodging whenever he saw a stone coming, and rather pleased on the whole, as he had such a good place to see the fun. The boat had gained headway by this time, and would soon have been out of stones' throw, when a sailor, dead

drunk, as it seemed, who had been forgotten on the beach, pressed through the crowd on shore, and seeing his boat gone, gave a loud cheer and jumped right down from the top of the landing-stairs into the water. The boat had, of course, to wait for him, and the peons tried in the meantime their best to hit the sailor, who was still standing, nearly unharmed, mocking and cursing them, nobody noticing the swimmer till a cry turned every eye upon him — the man was sinking. Nearly dead drunk, he had hardly an idea which direction he should take, and had also most certainly so heavy a load on board already, that he sunk and took in water. Once he came up, and sunk again. The boat pulled back now as hard as it could, and a couple of Chileans also pushed out to him with another small boat from the stairs. All hostilities had ceased, and both boats met, when the now perfectly unconscious seaman rose up, just with his head above the water for the last time. Four or five hands grasped him, and pulling him into the boat, threw him into the bottom, and then bending to their oars, they shot along swiftly to wards the man-of-war.

Speaking of a midshipman, I cannot forget a little fellow of that species whom I met one day on the beach outside town. I was coming from the lighthouse, where I had been looking if I could see anything of my expected vessel, and he was standing

with his arms folded, fondly observing a splendid man-of-war steamer, which was stationed here in the bay. The young gentleman might have been at the utmost fourteen years of age. I stopped not far from him, and also took a look over the bay; and he, seeing my eye turned towards his own vessel, I fancy, broke out admiringly, and said, half-turning to me, as if there had been no other vessel in the bay:

"Isn't she a noble-looking craft? Did you ever see her equal?"

"The steamer, you mean? Yes, she is a beautiful vessel," I answered. "Where is she bound for?"

"Bound for?" I shall never forget the look he gave me, "bound for? why Sir, she is a man-of-war steamer."

Just at this time the Chileans held a kind of eve to their September festivities, in honour of obtaining their independence. On a free and open plain upon the hills, near the lighthouse, on a sunny day in August, tents were pitched as if a fair was going to be held, and crowds of people flocked up on the heights to see the militia-artillery exercise. The blue, red, and white Chilean flag, with the two rearing guanakas, fluttered in the fresh breeze, and everywhere around small family parties were camping, while an uninterrupted line of people was still moving up the small and steep path which led in a zig-zag course towards the top of the hill.

The militia marched and handled their guns, all drawn by hand, very well indeed, and the populace crowded round the drinking-tents, turning sometimes to look at the soldiers exercise, sometimes to watch the white sails on the horizon, as they came nearer, with the fresh southern breeze; for the place allowed a free view over the wide Pacific Ocean to the south, and west, and north, and the white breakers far below on the dark, slimy reefs.

Right between the groups walking up and down, or strewn over the ground, even into the very tents, amongst the drinking and eating multitude, riders galloped, as if their horses had softly-cushioned feet and not hard hoofs, ready to play the very mischief with any corn they might light upon. Now they stop near a group, laughing and drinking, the horse looking up into the eyes of his master's friends as if it knew every one of them, and so it did, I have not the least doubt.

Long cavalcades of ladies and gentlemen, the former nearly all clothed in English riding-habits, but often also in that of the guasso señoritas, with their common frock and a short embroided poncho thrown over their dress, and very frequently attended by officers of the English army, galloped up the hill, following the broad, smooth road towards the lighthouse, or stopping opposite the marching and manœuvring militia.

tween them and the flowers, which can creep over the stone, but no more whisper their sweet loving words to the sleepers beneath. My last resting-place I should like very different. I should wish to be buried in the forest, in my own green woods; and the tree whose roots twined around me, should drop its dew upon the lowly grave to water my flowers, and give shelter to the birds which whispered their sweet songs over the departed; but no hard and heavy stone upon the grave—the earth presses heavily enough upon us, when we have to bid farewell to all that was so dear and beloved upon it!

Just behind the splendid monument of the Gonzales' family stood a high, singularly-shaped building; it really looked like an old whitewashed watch-tower, without door or window, about eighteen feet high, and perhaps five or six in diameter, with a kind of bird-cage iron network over it. The young man who had offered to be my guide up here, told me this was the bone-house, where the bones were thrown in when they cleaned an old pit!

Pit! did they bury their dead here in pits? I should soon learn. He led me to a hole, as I may well call it, in the lower part of the cemetery, not twenty steps from the very pavilion which offers a view over the animated and beautiful scenery below. It was about ten feet

How dangerously these huts hang upon the steep slopes of the hills? if a good earthquake were to shake these posts again together, and throw one hut into the chimney of the other, or if a fire were to rage along these dry spars and rafters, playing along on the banks, and everywhere finding combustibles for its greedy tongue—the idea alone is dreadful; and, as I am told, a fire has raged since that time, at least in a part of this quarter, clearing the slopes of habitations and sending the burning beams hissing into the narrow mountain gulch below.

This part of the town seems, however, to be in rather bad repute—and not without cause. Here are the most frequented, and in fact only haunts of the sailors, who have given the different summits of the quebradas the significant appellations of fore and maintop, &c. But you had better take care how you enter these narrow streets, that look like mountain-passes, after dark, or you might get better acquainted with the wild life of Valparaiso than you ever had a wish to.

Drunken sea or landsmen—the difference, as it seems, disappearing at this altitude—press you in their rough benevolence to drink with them; and quarrels and jealousy have already caused many a blade to be drawn, and coloured it with the warm heart's-blood of the victim. If a murder is committed, every door is directly closed, the persons in

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with the wild girls of this region. They seemed to perform a kind of quadrille, but there was no order in the whole, the couples pulling here and there, and running against one another in their mad revelry.

A wild peculiar cry, like a scream, sounded through the room ; a tall, sunburnt fellow, a guasso as it seemed, of the better class, not frequently seen in this part of the town, jumped into the ring, and the music stopped ; the dancers stepped back upon the crowd, and the Chilean called to the musicians in a clear manly voice for a samacueca.

The next minute they struck up the tune, but it was a national dance, and three or four other guitars directly joined in, while the young guasso threw off his poncho and hat, and stood awaiting his lady. He was a splendid specimen of a South American, and his eyes sparkled and glistened, when the ring parted opposite to him, and a really beautiful, tall and fair-haired girl, with a wild deceitful look in her soft eyes, stepped out, waving a white kerchief in her hand.

The samacueca is the national dance of the Chileans—the fandango of their Spanish ancestors, and always performed by a young man and woman —the couple move up to one another, waving and flirting with their kerchiefs, approaching and returning, passing each other, sometimes side by side, sometimes under the lifted arm, but always

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stay here to respond to the wishes of a great many of his countrymen in the town. French comedians had also come in the 'Edouard,' but there was a difficulty in the representation: part of it had to be performed by French, part of it by Spanish actors and actresses, none of them understanding both languages. But there is a help for everything, so the French actors performed their part in French, the Spanish theirs in their own language, and all went well. The French were raving mad that evening, and I really do not know how many pairs of white kid gloves they burst during that one half hour, but there was a continual clapping of hands, and the poet, an old silver-haired and venerable man, was loudly called for at the end. He was sitting in a box close to the stage, between two young ladies in white, and rose up between them to speak a few words of thanks in his own language.

The French seemed to consider the whole as a kind of national triumph, and went off, like rockets, in every direction.

The theatre at Valparaiso is a lofty and well-finished building, and boasts an exceedingly good orchestra. The Chileans, like all the southern nations, are very fond of music, and have an ear for it as well.

I witnessed this same night a most singular custom among the native South Americans, which

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smoked their cigarillos. But the most remarkable thing in the room seemed to me a large kind of scaffold, which occupied the other corner opposite the bed, consisting of a light frame-work, ornamented all over with artificial flowers, little pictures of saints, and a quantity of small lighted wax-candles. On the top of it, a most extraordinarily well-made wax-figure of a little child was seated on a low wooden chair, dressed in a snow-white little frock; the eyes were closed, the pale cheeks tinged by a soft rosy hue, and the whole figure perfectly strewn with flowers. It was so deceptive, that when I drew near at first, I thought it a real child, while a young woman below it, pale, and with tears in her eyes, might very well have been the mother. But that was most certainly a mistake; for at this moment one of the men stepped up to her, and invited her to the dance, and a few minutes afterwards she was one of the merriest in the crowd.

But it must really be a child—no sculptor could have formed that little face so exquisitely; and now one light went out, close to the little head, and the cheek lost its rosy hue. My neighbours at last remarked the attention with which I looked upon the figure or child, whichever it was; and the nearest one informed me, as far as I could understand him, that the little thing up there was really the child of the woman with the pale face,

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The Chileans have other singular fashions with their burials. Next morning I went up to the grave-yard, which is on the very steep, abrupt hill, under which the town is built, and the quebradas running up to it, it overlooks the place with the whole bay, and commands an unbounded prospect seawards. A little pavilion is raised on the very edge of the cliff, and you can enjoy the most beautiful view from the habitation of the dead; and many an hour I dreamed away up there, surrounded by putrefaction in every sense of the word.

I like to visit burial-grounds; I find an ineffable charm in walking about between the flat, low hummocks under which the quiet dead lie, with clasped hands, in their narrow beds, like withered leaves in an album, the short inscription upon them marking name and date of the leaf. And how I love to see the sweet flowers keeping watch over the sleeping! Loving hands planted them there, and they shake their dew and waft their soft odour over the tombs!

There were some beautiful monuments in the Roman Catholic Cemetery, the most beautiful of all being that of an English family of the name of Waddington, and another of the Gonzales, cut in Italy out of Cararra marble, to cover the dead on the shores of the Pacific Ocean. But I do not like monuments; they press too heavily upon the poor departed—they lie too impenetrably be-

tween them and the flowers, which can creep over the stone, but no more whisper their sweet loving words to the sleepers beneath. My last resting-place I should like very different. I should wish to be buried in the forest, in my own green woods; and the tree whose roots twined around me, should drop its dew upon the lowly grave to water my flowers, and give shelter to the birds which whispered their sweet songs over the departed; but no hard and heavy stone upon the grave—the earth presses heavily enough upon us, when we have to bid farewell to all that was so dear and beloved upon it!

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deep, sixteen or eighteen feet long, and perhaps ten feet wide, and seemed at first sight to be empty; but a shudder seized upon me, when a second look convinced me of the dreadful reality. The pit was full of corpses: on all sides they lay, stretched out here without coffin or cover, with only a few spadefuls of sand thrown over them; here a leg stuck out from the horrible mass, there a hand or an arm; and fresh corpses were thrown on top, and formed only another layer, till the hole was filled, and another one had to be opened for a new ghostly population; but the old one is left open, without a cover to keep off rain or sunshine, till it is filled.

They have at the same time the singular custom of burying their dead—if you call it burying—at twelve o'clock at night. With the twelfth stroke of the clock, the coffin or corpse-bearers, if the dead are laid in this hole, and are carried out in an open kind of box, leave the house, and walk up in as large a body as circumstances admit, each bearing a lantern, to the burial-ground, burying the dead, if they have money enough to pay for a single grave (twenty dollars, I believe), or laying them down in that hole—ay, throwing them down from above, if they have not hands enough to carry or lift them down—one man following afterwards on a ladder, which is let down into the pit, to stretch the body out, not for the

sake of the dead, but that it may occupy as little room as possible. I witnessed this proceeding several times, and shall never forget the impression it made upon me.

Right opposite the Roman Catholic burial-ground, there is also a Protestant burial-place, but without this dreadful pit. Simple stones or wooden crosses stand at the head of the dead, and no such dreadful spot—dreadful, though it have for its background the blue Pacific Ocean and the snow-decked Cordilleras—sickens the heart of the beholder.

A great many sailors especially lie buried here, and I noticed some humorous verses upon some of the graves. For instance, the inscription on Isaac Tickell's last lodgings, of H. M. ship 'President,' ran thus:

"Shipmates, all my cruise is up,
My body's moored at rest,
My soul is—where?—aloft, of course,
Rejoicing with the blest!"

On going home at night, after visiting the burial-grounds, I was astonished at finding the different watchmen whistle whenever I passed one. At first I thought they saw something suspicious about me, but I soon found it was a rule with all nocturnal ramblers. Wherever a person passed through a street, the signal, a shrill whistle, was

given by the nearest watchman; the next knew through it that somebody was about, who ought to have been in his bed by this time, and kept a good look-out for him: he most certainly could not hide, without being missed. The police in Valparaiso is really the best I ever saw all over the world, and far better than our own German watchmen, who most frequently sleep at night from one hour to another, merely bawling, as soon as they open their eyes, the hour, and blowing horns or springing rattles, to awaken all those who have not yet heard they are awake. Having made the greatest noise they possibly can, and given warning by it to the thieves about that they must keep quiet a few minutes longer, they squat down again somewhere, to be out of harm's way.

The calabozo was a singular place, which I visited with one of the German captains, who had all his crew locked up there. The sailors had refused to work as long as their mate was on board, and the captain had them locked up to consider the thing over again. He asked me to go down with him, for he wanted to start in a few days, and was going to see if the men had made up their minds to be reasonable.

I never saw such a prison in my life. In an open court-yard stood a quantity of waggons—a kind of caravan, like those in which wild beasts are carried among us to fairs and markets—waggons

about twenty-five feet long, and eight or nine wide, open all round, but guarded strongly by thick iron bars; and in one of these, really like newly-caught animals, the poor sailors were sitting, the whole crew in the one box. But they would not leave the place to go on board again, and declared they would stick to what they had first said. The captain had to take them down to the landing in the waggon, and carry them on board his vessel with the assistance of the police; he afterwards reached San Francisco with them, but, of course, they ran away there the first day.

I had now been at Valparaiso fully three weeks, waiting for the 'Reform' to come in; and though I had every possible cause to be satisfied with my situation, as I lived in Mr. Fehrmann's family—he was married to a young Chilean lady—as if I had been in my own home, still there is never any satisfaction if a man is waiting for anything; impatience will be always the predominant feeling, and a restlessness that will not let you pass your time as you ought to do. Besides this, I could not leave the town, for there were always ships in sight, and each of them might be the 'Reform,' while I had no idea how long she would stop here when she really arrived, perhaps only a day or two, and I dared not leave the harbour, for fear of missing her.

At last, she arrived one fine Sunday morning,

and when I went on board, expecting to hear of her starting again on the morrow or next day, the captain told me, he did not know if the ship ever would leave the harbour, at least with these passengers, for they had tried to take his life and he was going to have the case tried. The passengers for their part said, that they were going to sue him for treating them badly, and insulting them, principally a lady on board, and trying to starve them on the voyage. In fact, things seemed to be in a pretty mess on board.

But matters soon cooled down; the Russian consul (an English gentleman in town, I have forgotten his name), as the 'Reform,' sailed under Russian colours, had them all a couple of times before him; the captain agreed to lay in some fresh provisions, the passengers were warned to behave themselves, and deliver up all the arms they had in their possession. And eight days afterwards we sailed, for the quarrel lasted so long; and I believe it would have lasted even longer, had not those who had had the most to say, been the first to run short of money, and having no dollars left to spend, they now wanted to get away from here as soon as possible.

Our passage to California was in general a good one; we ran out to the west from the first start, expecting the north-west winds afterwards, which were said to prevail in the higher latitudes, but

north and north-north-east winds instead set in, and being carried by these farther westward than we had expected, we were taken a little out of our course. Higher up, the breeze, however, became more favourable, and we entered, after beating for about three days off and on the Californian coast, the longed-for entrance of the Bay of San Francisco, the so-called "golden gate of California."

CALIFORNIA.

CHAPTER I.

SAN FRANCISCO.

With my passage through the Golden Gate, a perfectly new phase of my life commenced; but instead of giving such an important step a serious thought, lest we might jump head over heels into this new chaos, to which history never yet had furnished a parallel—though none of us would have been the worse for reflection, none of us thought of such a thing. Each minute produced a new and ever-varying picture, which rose, as it seemed, from the ground around us, and we felt as men might, who have sat for long months in prisons and then stepped suddenly into the free and dazzling light of the sun—it was a very natural thing that we should try first to accustom our eyes to the strange light, all the rest would come in regular succession.

The Golden Gate is really a splendid entrance to such a bay as San Francisco; it bears some resemblance to the heads of Port Jackson, except that the mountains are higher here, and the country looked even wilder; but the English reader has had descriptions enough about it, and I should much prefer taking him back to our own ship, to commence with me the new, and if wearisome, most certainly wild and interesting life.

The passengers had crowded on the fore part of the vessel, and we looked first for tents and huts along the shore, and numerous herds of cattle and horses gladdened our eyes—such things look well after a long voyage.

"There is a tent," the cry suddenly rose—"there, close to those little dark bushes; and over there again—there is a quantity of them; that must be a town," and with such acclamations the attention of the new gold diggers was called now to one, now to the other shore; and an hour later a fresh breeze, and the extraordinarily strong tide that flows here, carried us speedily up into the bay and towards the hill, on whose brow the first huts of San Francisco itself already became visible.

"But I can't see anybody washing," some disappointed voice cried from the forecastle, "donnerwetter! is there any room left on shore." The good man seemed to fear he would be crowded here on the hills.

"There are diggers—there they are washing!" another suddenly cried, and with lightning speed this cry was caught up by fifty other voices; the men seemed perfectly happy at having already found gold-diggers on shore and with them a kind of assurance of the reality of the thing, till we drew a little nearer the spot, and found in the sppposed gold-hunters a couple of quiet cows, which had been looking for grass instead of gold in the small valley.

But San Francisco itself now attracted all our glances. There to the right, on that flat and naked hill more and more tents and low wooden buildings became visible, the hill itself yet concealing the greatest part, and now—mast on mast—a perfect forest of them opened at once to our sight. Ship after ship, forming a perfect town upon the water, filled the inner bay, and hundreds of little boats and small sailing craft were darting everywhere over the yet unoccupied places. With this, the tents and houses—riders appearing on the tops of the hills—the more widely spreading town—the eye found no time to take in all at once the strange novelty which surrounded us, and we stood a long while perfectly bewildered, before single objects in our immediate neighbourhood obtained their rightful share of attention.

Captain Meyer of the 'Talisman' pulled out to us from his own ship, which now lay in sight of

us, and a few minutes afterwards the heavy anchor rattled and thundered down to the golden bottom.

And California? I really do not know where to begin. It seemed as if the old tales of the Thousand and One Nights had become true, and an indefinite number of genii with their golden bowls full of diamonds and other valuables, must spring out directly, from the clayey bottom, and offer their treasures to us. People spoke here of gold, as if it was only common dust, and the price asked and paid for everything proved it at least partly true.

Only to go on shore, a distance of perhaps one hundred yards, we had to pay one dollar apiece, and everything else was in proportion. The town itself, spreading out over a wide area of ground, consisted of hardly anything but low huts and tents. Fremont's Hotel, a small two-storied frame house—which by the bye I never saw inhabited—towered like a palace among its low neighbours, and these confused habitations were scattered in wild disorder all over the place, facing the most favourable spot of ground, only respecting those roads, which had been marked out for public streets. The beautiful weather, as hardly any rain falls throughout the summer season, had encouraged people to take nearly anything of woven or spun manufacture to set up a house, more to get a partition from the street, than for any other

purpose. Houses, if I may give them that name, were raised on the lightest possible frames, even basket-work, covered or stretched over with the lightest possible calico; and colours? what a variety caught the eye, on looking down such a street—the blue-flowered cotton had not been sufficient for the fore-part of the house, so a red square piece had been added to it with immense stitches, while perhaps a bright yellow pattern had served to cover, together with a striped green piece, the hinder parts of the wall, and complete the roof. Many of the huts or tents had at the same time a sign-board stuck before them—for the house itself could never have supported it—as large as the front itself, and covered with immense letters, informing the public that the inhabitant of this odd little habitation had a store for the sale of nearly everything imaginable, and at the same time was not improbably a doctor or dentist. The sign-board had, of course, been painted in the States, and brought out here to astonish the natives.

But the new-comers were far more interesting still, and I soon divided those I saw sauntering or hurrying through, and in the streets, into three different and very distinct classes. The first of these were those who already lived here or were accustomed to the strange objects around them. The most of them, I am nearly certain, were merchants, or their clerks, who went about their

business, quickly and without looking about them much; they knew the goings-on of this strange part of the world already, and their time was money.

The second class were those new-comers, who had landed everything, looked about them for a fortnight, fixed a day when they would start for the mines, and amused themselves in the meantime by walking about the streets, with their hands in their pockets, to see and hear what they could during the short time of their stay in town. These groups stop before the calico houses, and laugh at the different patterns, come to a dead halt where they see iron-ware, lift and try the weight of the pick-axes and spades, take the dirty crowbars, shaking their heads at the same time, between two fingers, rock the cradles, the store-keeper has put as an inducement before his door; and one or two, who have already inquired into the mysteries of gold-washing, as likely as not with a book in their hands, are comparing the reality with the description, and trying to explain the use of the wonderful article. Such men inquire the price of everything, but buy nothing, having brought all such tools with them from the States, and ask the prices now only to smile inwardly at the thought of the money they have already saved by not being obliged to pay Californian prices for all such things. They also enter the gambling-houses, saunter up and down between the tables, look at

the pictures, talk about the large pieces of gold which a gambler has piled up here and there before him for a bait, even risk, but in very rare cases, a single dollar on a favourite card, with the excuse —we have come here to try our luck, we must try everything;—but losing it, they leave the house as quietly as they entered it, to visit, perhaps, an auction-room, with the same profit to the owner of it, stopping the passage there for hours, without the least intention of buying the slightest article.

The third are the working-class, but in a far different sense from what we understand by this name; and these might, or ought to be divided again into two different classes, into voluntary and astonished workmen.

The voluntary are those who have made up their minds to face anything; they have thrown off their coats, rolled up their sleeves, and go at it with a will to set up their huts or houses, work on the road for Government perhaps, or do anything that comes within their reach—not to get rich in this way, but to get their things in order, or save the money for their passage to the mines.

The astonished, on the other hand—and the landing swarms with them—are those who find themselves suddenly obliged to work here, because no one will do it for them, while a single errand costs them as much as they paid for a month's service in the old country. They have read about

such a state of things existing in California as they really find it; but believed it with a face, as if they were going to say: "Oh, you're only joking," and now find themselves, to their utter dismay, in a scrape, and don't know exactly how to get out of it again. They stand on the shore of this most singular country, with their trunks, boxes, chests, and other things around them, and nobody seems to care the least in the world about them or their trunks. If they do not really intend to stop down there on the landing all night—and other boats in fact are already pressing in, and want the room to land their own baggage—they must move, and at it they go at last toiling up the steep banks in the sweat of their brow. They do not pull off their coats; for they would be ashamed to show themselves in the streets in shirt-sleeves, and every twenty yards, or as soon as they meet anybody, they set down whatever they are carrying, wipe their red-hot faces, and ask the man, who looks to them very much like a labourer, to take their luggage to an hotel, looking in great astonishment after the "free and independent," who, most likely, tells them "to do it themselves, if they wanted it done." They have torn their fine dress-coats, and knocked their silk hats into all manner of shapes; and these are the men who stop at last on the top of the bank, sitting on their own trunk which they have carried up here, and wiping their faces, perhaps,

with an embroidered handkerchief, murmur reproachfully—"and this is California!"

To form an opinion about the country itself, merely from the first wild impressions—and these I wish to give the reader—would be madness. At that time, seventy thousand men were supposed to be working in the mines, and San Francisco, with its environs, was estimated to contain about twenty-five thousand; but it would be just as easy to count the ants in a garden, as the fluctuating population of such a town, and the inhabitants of thousands and thousands of tents scattered through the interior.

But the first harvest time of San Francisco, where every article of food and clothing cost nearly its weight in gold, seemed to have passed. Quantities of goods lay even without a shelter or cover in the streets, and principally on the shore of the bay—and in the auction-rooms goods were sold at any price—auctioneers only wanting to hear a bid, to get things out of their hands. I saw, for instance, a good lot of tea sold in this way for five cents a pound.

Lumber maintained an excellent price; but everybody had written for it to the States and Valparaiso, Australia, Sweden and Germany, and a number of ships were expected with it.

Rents were extraordinary, and for small houses or rooms, in the business part of town, sometimes

five and six hundred dollars per month were paid. Restaurants of two or three rooms, with a kitchen, paid from one thousand to twelve hundred dollars, only for the month—and so on. Even to deposit your trunk in some boarding-house or store-room you had to pay from one dollar to one and a half per month; the man who took care of the things, as he called them, not being in any way responsible for their safe or even dry keeping—you might just as well have put them under some tree in the bush. But what matter to the gold-diggers? they had left the whole world behind them; and should they now hang their heart on an old trunk, even if it contained their last shirt? No! away to the mines; in one day they would be able to wash out there the value of two such trunks; and where was the use of wasting a thought upon it?

A stranger could see how things were thrown about as soon as he put foot ashore; there were at that time, I really believe, not ten square feet in the city, where a dirty, but in every other respect perfectly new shirt, was not lying. People had to pay six dollars per dozen for washing; and new shirts only cost seven and eight, and the consequence was, everybody bought new ones, and threw the old away, which were three months afterwards picked up again, principally by some Irishwomen, and washed and sold. But a good many merchants, who brought fine linen with them, and

were not willing to throw a shirt away which they had worn perhaps only a day or two, put them by in some trunk, and sent them—it may sound ridiculous, but is notwithstanding true—by vessels bound for China, to get them washed there for a mere nothing, and brought back when the ship returned. It was a rather long distance to send for a laundress.

I was interested, but at the same time, disgusted, by the quantity of gambling hells and tables, which pay an enormous rent to government, and in no country is anything better than a licensed way of stealing money and ruining people. How it will be in later times with these places I do not know, but they will never be stopped without bloodshed, and the people of the once-organized state will have, as they once did in several parts of the United States, to lynch the gamblers to get rid of them.

But in spite of this, they are most excellent places for the study of character, and I have passed many an hour in these well-warmed and well-lighted rooms, amongst a crowd of people who were pressing up and down between the tables, stopping sometimes where a larger pile of gold than common, or a higher bet, attracted their curiosity. During the time I stopped in San Francisco, a Mexican—always the calmest and seemingly the least eager players—entered the El Dorado, and after standing for a time in the crowd, wrapped up n his old serape and watching how the game went

he finally pulled out an old linen bag of dollars, as everybody thought, and put it upon a card, from that minute bending over the table, and watching the fingers of the gambler, as if he was tracing the blood running through his veins. He won, and the gambler quietly took the bag and opened it, to count the dollars, when he turned suddenly as pale as a sheet, for the bag contained, not dollars, but doubloons. As he had not money enough on his own table, he called on some of his neighbours, and the Mexican was paid directly, and afterwards left the room as quietly as he had entered it. But this was only an exceptional case, and hundreds and hundreds lose their all in these hells, for they have not even a fair chance against the gamblers themselves, all of whom—and I really believe there is not a single exception—play false wherever they get a chance; and what difference in that case is there between this and stealing?

The representatives of various nations he meets everywhere in the streets, are most striking to the stranger. The Californians themselves, with their large, gaily-coloured ponchos and their broad-brimmed glazed hats; and the Chinese, these two being, in fact, the most prominent, with the addition of the Mexicans in their slashed trousers, white drawers and dirty serapes, Frenchmen from the southern parts of France, with their red caps and sunburnt faces; South Sea Islanders, Malays, Chilians, and Argentines; English,

Germans, Italians, claim your attention, and, in short, every native on the globe seems to have sent her representative; and here and there, but very rarely, you may notice a Californian Indian gliding quickly through the streets, to gain open ground again, looking around him at the same time in dull and mute astonishment.

Thousands of these different people start daily for the mines, partly in small steamers, which had commenced to run to Stockton and Sacramento city, partly in schooners, and partly in small sailing-boats, in a slower, but also cheaper way, and even round the Bay of San Francisco, towards Pueblo San José with mules and horses, but these only for the most southern mines.

I now inquired for my luggage, left on board the 'Talisman,' as the reader will recollect. A part of it I found in good order, but another part had disappeared; neither the captain nor the supercargo troubling their heads much about it after I had left the ship.

This arranged, I myself looked round for a conveyance for the mines, and not wishing to pay thirty dollars a-piece for a passage on board one of the steamers, some of us, all passengers by the 'Reform,' (and a motley group we were), determined on going in a large schooner, the 'Pomona,' which was ready to start the very next day.

On the 19th of October we were on the landing at the appointed spot, to wait there for the 'Pomona's' boat to take us on board.

CHAPTER II.

A TRIP TO THE GOLD MINES IN THE RAINY SEASON.

PUNCTUALLY at two o'clock—I don't know how it is, but we Germans are always punctual—we took our luggage down to the shore, expecting the promised boat every minute, but obtaining, instead of an early start, a most splendid two hours' opportunity of watching the lively intercourse at this place, to our hearts' content. Boats were everywhere coming in from the different vessels, setting passengers on land with their luggage, and leaving the poor animals not unfrequently in the nicest predicament—a little steamer, that had come from Sacramento having also just landed some sick people. A cart seemed to have been already provided, for it came down from town for them, and two very pale and sickly-looking men were put into it, and taken up to town, perhaps to be buried in a day or two.

"You are for the mines?" said an old sunburnt American, surely from the backwoods, for he had the entire cut of the face. He was going to pass us, but stopped on seeing our "fixings," with a singular kind of fun lighting up his eyes—and he had cause enough for it, for some of us looked sufficiently green.

"Yes, we are," I answered him, rather abruptly, but the man was not so soon rebuffed.

"Well boys," he continued, giving his quid a turn from the larboard to the starboard side, "'a nod is as good as a wink to a blind horse,' but if you'll listen to reason—what I don't expect you will though—you had better stay here in town during the rainy season, which may commence every day. If you go up now to the mountains for to wash, it 'mought' be more likely you would get washed—you understand me."

It was all right, but the good man was wasting his time, and his counsel, in fact, came rather late, and I told him so, as we had already taken our passage on board the schooner for Sacramento city.

"Paid already?" he inquired, pursing his brows "and on board a schooner—deck passage?"

I only nodded to him, and the old fellow, without saying another word, shoved his hands down into his breeches pockets as far as he could get them, and whistling "Yankee doodle" with all his might, went down the street.

I did not like his manner; the old man had most certainly seen a good deal of California; but what could we do now? at this very moment, the 'Pomona's' boat came alongside, and taking our things on board, turned of course our attention from every other object. The schooner lay between the rest of the vessels, and in a spot where I did not see how we could get out again; and how did it look on board? I thought of the old American already—there was no room even to put a foot down upon deck, every inch of the gangway, as well as every other part of the vessel, was stowed with flour-bags, lumber, and barrels; the surface of this perfect chaos of things being crowded at the same time with passengers, who seemed to look upon us as intruders upon their peace. But what could we do? throwing, therefore, what little luggage we had, on the flour-bags and molasses barrels, we followed after them, trying at the same time, though in vain, to look out a place where we could pass the night with only some degree of comfort.

Our anchor was not weighed, or the mainsail set till sunset, and I felt really curious to see how we should clear, in spite of a nice little breeze, all the neighbouring vessels. And sure enough we did not clear them, for the mate ran her, after we had made hardly twenty yards headway, right plump into the bowsprit of the next barque, and before

we could get clear of her and repair damages, it had become so dark that there was no possibility of starting again that night.

This was a fine beginning of a voyage, and I was only glad the old American could not see us here. We passed a miserable night—very good acccommodation for deck passengers was promised to us, but we did not even get a place to stretch ourselves; the consequence of course being a bad dysentery, very easily caught in this climate. Next day we started, but only covered a distance that I could have pulled in half the time in a skiff, yet we were moving at least, till the third day, when the old schooner which drew ten feet of water, though the pilot himself said that we could never pass the bar of the Sacramento with it in the present state of the river, ran comfortably aground in the very bay—and there we stuck.

The captain, an American, but one of the worst specimens of the nation—such a character as you principally find on the flat, and steam-boats of the Mississipi and Arkansas (his name was Peterson, I shall never forget it,) swore and cursed the whole day, from the very minute the schooner started, to the moment the sails were again furled. I do not attach much weight to a slight curse, but I, and even the sailors of the schooner, felt disgusted at the low, profane fellow, with his never-ceasing oaths. He could not give a single

command without such an addition, and a hundred times a day—for he had his flying jib up and down five and six times every hour—we heard him bawling on deck. "Take down that flying jib," followed by a horrible string of oaths.

We had to get a lighter from Benitia, a little town on the bay, to ease our ship off the bar, and lost by it fully twenty-four hours, and after we got off, Mr. Peterson wanted to take the same freight on board again, and load her down as before; but to this we objected. We seven Germans, and three or four Americans, told him we would never allow him to take the goods on board as long as we were there, since the pilot himself had said we should not be able to clear the bar with them; several of us, besides, were very sick of the whole affair, and the captain offered at last to return us part of our passage-money, if we would go with some other conveyance up from New York, another little town right on the mouth of the Sacramento and San Joaquim. We were glad enough to take advantage of such a chance, and soon found a boatman, who passed us with a nice little sailing wherry, to take us all together up to Sacramento city for ten dollars a head. We quickly agreed — the man made one hundred dollars in about thirty-two hours—and jumping aboard, had the satisfaction of passing that same evening,

the 'Pomona' again, lying high and dry on the bar of the Sacramento river, while we could even hear that sweet captain of hers, at the distance we were, cursing his mate and all hands on deck.

Our boatswain was the captain of the 'Sabine' a full ship which had come out to California with passengers, the ship being owned by the passengers themselves, who had bought her in New York, loaded her with provisions and some goods, and got her out here, after deducting their own passage-money, nearly for nothing. She now lay for sale in the harbour, with only the captain and cook on board.

Ships were very frequently sold in this way in the United States—old tubs thought unfit for sea long before, and perhaps condemned in one harbour already, when the gold excitement drove people nearly mad, and everybody wanted to be the first to get away, were painted afresh, received another name and a couple of new spars perhaps, and away they went, with a cargo of passengers and provisions round the Cape. If everything went well, they doubled the Cape and reached their place of destination, but many of these—never in a condition to weather the storms and rough sea of those latitudes, and a new coat of paint not being sufficient to hold them longer together—went to pieces, and many a poor sailor or passenger has

had his gold fever cooled in the icy waves of that dangerous Cape.

We went up the Sacramento with a light though favourable breeze, and it was pleasant to the eye to see the beautiful oaks that filled the river bottoms, and were at many places encircled by luxurious vines and other creepers. But the bottom is not wooded far inland, the timber stretching only to about a mile or two in breadth, and being bounded again by wide and perfectly bare and swampy plains, on which, however, a most excellent grass grows, and they serve at the same time as lurking places for the elk and grizzly bear. The river itself is tolerably broad and open, with a good channel even for larger vessels, and as it is cleared by the annual floods from the greater number of snags, boats have, with only a little attention, no dangerous passage at all.

That night we camped on the bank of the river by a good roaring fire, there being plenty of dry wood about there to keep it up all night, and next afternoon we reached Sacramento city, rather a proud name for a place which looked at that time very much as if a wandering tribe of Indians had struck camp there for a night or two. From the river we could see nothing at all of the town, as nearly all the trees, chiefly large sycamores and oaks, had been left standing along the bank, though the river itself evinced the neighbour-

hood of a large and busy place by all kinds and varieties of vessels, which lay there, some moored, others stopping to land passengers, and some in fact run aground; among these, two large full ships, which must have come up here with very high water, and were now lying dolefully upon their beam-ends.

Taking our things up the high and dusty bank, we struck camp just above town, on the edge of a little thicket, where we had plenty of wood and water, but I was astonished at seeing the busy life of this so young, but, in fact, rapidly rising place. Everybody seemed in a hurry; carts and waggons were pressing to and fro, bringing and taking goods from and to the river; here a party were loading their mules for the mines, there another setting up a tent or small hut to commence business. Wherever a man was seen idle in the street, he was sure to be asked if he wanted work, and even the schooners at the landing paid eight dollars a day for taking out freight, while carpenters and all other artizans, were offered twelve, fourteen, and sixteen dollars a day. As provisions, and, in fact, everything else, was very dear here, we wanted to get off as soon as possible, and required for this purpose, before anything else, a mule to carry our provisions and part of our other effects, and they were daily in the auction mart of the place.

The same morning I went into a drug-store to buy some linseed, for I was not yet well, and felt extremely weak. On asking the price of the linseed first, before I ordered the man to get it for me, for I had began to grow careful, the apothecary told me it was one dollar an ounce; the young man, with a beautiful crop of fiery red hair, assuring me at the same time that he would not get up from his chair for less than a dollar, so I did not disturb his rest any farther.

Next morning I went to the auction mart, and I wish the reader could have been with me there, to see the singularly busy life of that little place. In one of the widest streets of Sacramento, the houses of course consisting of nothing but tents and some low wooden frames, and beneath some beautiful old oak trees which the inhabitants had left standing, the auction was held, continuing from early morning till late in the afternoon every day of the week, except Sunday, and collecting of course all those who have any business as well as those who have none—only to see the sport, or perhaps hear the prices of the different things and animals.

At several spots, where they had chosen the stump of a tree or some large cask set on end for that purpose, lank and lean down-easters—and you will know them wherever you find them through the world—stood praising and selling with nearly incredible volubility all that came under

their hands. But these had, in spite of this, the fewest auditors, for the greatest mass of spectators or buyers formed a perfect avenue in the street, up and down which eight or ten auctioneers were galloping upon just as many mules or horses.

"Gentlemen, eighteen dollars; only eighteen dollars!" one of them croaked in a hoarse and hardly audible voice, for he had been screaming in that way for the last fourteen days! praising an old white horse, which really seemed to be only held together by the saddle-girt, "eighteen dollars for this fine, young, excellent horse! Gentlemen—shall I say twenty? Only eighteen dollars for this excellent riding-horse, gentlemen! Only eighteen dollars, with saddle and bridle, alone worth thirty in San Francisco!"

"One hundred and thirty dollars for this fine mule, gentlemen!" another cried, galloping close up to the hoarse one, drowning his voice completely with his own. "Only one hundred and thirty dollars—worth one hundred and eighty or two hundred, gentlemen—shall I say one hundred and thirty-five?—hundred and thirty-two—thank you, gone for one hundred and thirty-two dollars, gentlemen."

It was in fact a beautiful mule, and was sold afterwards for one hundred and fifty-one dollars; the price of mules varying also from sixty up to that sum, just as there were buyers in the market or

parties come up who wanted to start soon. The horses, nearly all of which had come over the mountains that summer, looked pitiable enough—only one fetched sixty dollars, with saddle and bridle—the rest were nearly all sold at prices varying from twenty to thirty dollars.

Large waggons, commonly drawn by two yoke of oxen, all of which had also come over the mountains, fetched the best prices, as they were frequently sold, especially if the oxen looked well, for seven and eight hundred dollars.

We bought on the second day a good mule for seventy-five dollars, and packing what provisions and cooking utensils we possessed upon it, making a load of about one hundred and fifty to one hundred and eighty pounds, we started in good earnest for the mines; but the reader ought to have seen us. Our little party consisted of seven souls, and a motley company it was, three of them being merchants' clerks, one an apothecary, one a sailor, one a locksmith (the locksmith and one of the merchants' clerks were brothers), and myself. We had only taken with us what little luggage we could not do without, but, besides this, nearly all of us carried some kind of weapon or other. But I had better give the reader at once a true description of us all: he will get acquainted in that way with a great number of such parties that started, and even yet start, in a similar way, to the for gold.

We had been, as I have said, seven, but one of the young merchantmen gave up the second day, and stayed behind; the weather was too hot for him, and he was not able to undergo so many hardships as he thought we should be obliged to do from the first start—and he was not far wrong in that.

The two brothers, to commence with the most interesting part of the group—Jews from Berlin, seemed not to have had much idea about working hard, but like a good many of the new-comers, thought they should find the gold easily enough in the mountains: they wanted at least to make the trial, and were equipped accordingly. The locksmith carried a rifle and a long hanger, or couteau de chasse, at his side; wore a gray gardener's cap with a large peak, a leathern belt with a pistol stuck in it, and a white linen bag over his left shoulder; his trowsers were rolled up, and his coat lay with the rest of the things upon the mule, himself going in shirt-sleeves.

His brother sported a short jacket, rather tight-fitting trowsers, high water-boots, and a singularly formed blue cap, with a kind of china button upon it. He carried no gun, merely a hanger, but as he buckled it rather curiously around him, the weapon was always too far behind and too deep, and really seemed more for ornament than use.

Over his right shoulder he had also swung a kind of bag, with some little things he wanted on the road, and as our frying-pan would not agree upon the mule with the boiler and the tea-pot, but knocked against them continually, and kept up an uninterrupted clatter, he carried that in his hand, which made it look, in connexion with the couteau de chasse, something like a species of shield.

The little apothecary wore a green Polish cap, with four corners, a strip of black fur around it, and a red beard below it, carrying upon his back a kind of black soldier's knapsack, with a rolled-up blanket laid over it, and a short, stout walking-stick in his hand. His trowsers were also tucked up half-way to his knee, and he had a peculiar way of holding the stick in walking, far away from his body. His name was Kunitz: the two brothers were named Meyer.

The fourth, Huhne, was a stout young fellow, of about twenty years of age, with a green hunting-cap, yellow overcoat, trowsers, and half-boots, a striped bag over one shoulder, a rolled-up blanket over the other, and a double-barrelled gun in his hand.

The young sailor was equipped in his sea-clothes, but with the addition of a double-barrelled gun, and a rolled-up blanket.

I myself wore my old leathern hunting-shirt,

with hunting-pouch, rifle, and bowie-knife, with a Scotch cap and high water-boots, and also a small pouch buckled round me, which contained the most necessary medicines for the mines.

Such were our equipments for the diggings, and with the mule amongst us, which one of us always had to lead, the reader may be assured we formed a perfect picture.

During the first days we met with not the least incident worth noticing; we marched slowly along a very dusty and extremely hot road, meeting empty waggons and mules, coming from the mines, and sometimes horsemen, who galloped along at a rattling rate, with a serape or blanket behind them, leaving the mines and going back to the towns before the rainy season set in. Sometimes we even overtook pedestrians, who carried everything they had upon their backs, trudging slowly along upon their tedious track, or resting, already knocked up, under a shady tree, with their spades, pickaxes, and pans by their side.

The third night we reached an old but abandoned camping-place of some Indian tribe, and struck camp there ourselves. A really romantic spot had been chosen for it upon the shore of the Sacramento, many signs showing that the tribe could have left this place only a few days before, perhaps when those Americans came

and set up their tents not a hundred yards from their old hearths and homes. Down on the river there were the posts yet left, upon which the fishers had lain with their nets, and the planks still extending into clear water, where the squaws had come down to fill the drinking vessels, and get the water for their acorn mash. On the top of the bank we found the round stones, with which they crush and pound their acorn meal, and several wooden troughs and bowls, forgotten or purposely left behind, rested here and there against a tree. These brown sons of the plains had also been good hunters with their simple bows and arrows. What a quantity of deers' horns were lying on the roots of an old broken-down white oak, and close to it the wings of a black and powerful eagle proved the true and deadly aim of another marksman.

And where were the Indians who had chased the deer, or the squaws who had cooked their meals? Gone, driven away from the graves of their fathers, wandering homeless through a country where the pale-face had disturbed their peace, killed or frightened away their game, destroyed their fisheries, and threatened, and even taken their lives. One year had been enough to effect all this, and the Indians had already ceased to exist as a tribe, before they could only comprehend what fearful consequences the crowding

in of the pale faces upon their lands must entail on them and their children.

In North America, as well as other colonies, the oppression and destruction of the natives or aborigines was effected gradually, and was rather the effect of time, or the natural consequences of progressive immigration. The children saw year after year, how the strangers increased, and found themselves thrust back from the inhabited parts into their wild homes, the game growing scarcer with every year, though the whites themselves showed the tribes other means of earning their living, and even encouraged them to gain it in the same way that their conquerors did. Their religion and habits were at the same time respected, and the pioneers who went first among them and settled in their boundaries had to act with great precaution for their own security—the red son of the woods was too powerful in his own home, and the squatter feared the war-yell of the enraged warrior.

But how different was the fate of the Indians here; the cry of the new El Dorado shot through the world, and before the wild children of these mountains could have the least foreboding what would be the consequence of hundreds on hundreds flocking in and searching the gulches after the "yellow stones," their land was flooded with them. From all sides, over the mountains, down from the north, and up from the south, and even

over the sea, they pressed in; the natives were not driven back, they were surrounded and ruined, and while the whites suffered them to exist at least, they robbed them at the same time of nearly all the means of existence, while they punished the least crime against themselves with death.

But enough of these painful facts; we pity the poor tribes while we cannot save them, and the car, fate, rolls slowly on and crushes them beneath its wheels.

On the Thursday we passed the little tent-town of Vermont. Feather River here empties itself into the Sacramento, having Vernon upon its left shore, and another little town, Fremont, upon its right; the small tongue or peninsula which juts out between the two rivers being already occupied, though the yearly floods are said to cover the whole strip of land with the powerful swell of the torrents.

There was a ferry established here, large enough to carry over loaded waggons with their teams. That same night we camped on Bear Creek, following up Feather River now, to cross it farther above. Next day we crossed the Yuba River, which empties itself into Feather River, the Yuba also being a tolerable good water-course, with sufficient water for even small steamers a good way up, but now only navigated by some whale-boats. We could cross the Yuba, however, by wading.

Here we met a team coming down from the most northern mines, and a German was with it, who told us to go up by all means to the Reading mines, where there was everything we wanted —plenty of gold, provisions cheap, and several very nice families had taken up their quarters there to winter in the mountains. The distance was about one hundred and fifty miles, and we could do it easily in six days. It was getting dark, and the man had no time to stop any longer with us, for he wanted to cross the river with his team before night set in.

We held a grand council that evening as to where to go to, as we had fixed on no certain spot as yet; but thinking we could trust a countryman of ours who could not have the least interest in the place we might select for our winter quarters, we determined at last on following his advice and to foot it really to the Reading; there was plenty of game and gold, by his account, and we should have a pleasant life in the mountains.

But it was a singular fact, that everybody we spoke with about the mines had an opinion of his own, differing entirely from the rest, about all those places we heard commonly talked of. Some had told us before that the Reading mines were unhealthy; others had said, unhealthy, no, but there is no gold to be found; and this old fellow gave a glowing account of them. Just in the same way,

some praised Feather River up to the clouds, while others gave it the worst name of all the gold-producing streams in California—who was right now?

Next day, therefore, determined on taking the northern route, we crossed Feather River by wading it, and camped on the other side. On this day we came to the first Indian villages, built on the banks of the river, and consisting of at least thirty or thirty-five well-made huts, dug half in the ground, and walled and roofed very much like those of the Mandan Indians of North America. The huts were dug about four feet deep into the ground, strong posts being set up in the inside and the middle, with rafters and beams across them, which were overlaid and connected with branches, and finally covered with a thick and well-beaten coat of ground, which was of a perfectly round shape, and turned off the rain completely. Above-ground, they rose to a height of six or eight feet, having a small and low entrance, through which the inhabitants had to crawl in or out. A hole for the smoke was left exactly in the centre.

These villages look rather singular through a quantity of cylindrical plait-work erections, made out of cane, about ten feet high, and four feet in diameter. They serve to hold the winter provisions for the natives, and generally stand singly by the separate huts to which they belong, sometimes,

though, three and four together, looking very much like a kind of watch-tower, scattered through the camp. At the entrance of a great many huts we found squaws sitting, with large piles of roasted acorns spread out on a blanket, by their side, while they were cracking the hard shell of the acorns with their ivory teeth, dropping the kernel without touching it with the lips, into a piece of cloth upon their laps, and throwing the shell away. The dress of the women consisted of a blanket thrown round the shoulders, and a short but thick kind of mat, or rather apron, made out of reeds or rushes. The men, on the contrary, sported nearly every fashion in the world; some were entirely naked, without even a waistcoat, merely with some ornament in the hair; others had a blanket wrapped around them, while others again wore a perfectly European dress, with everything belonging to it, except shoes. Their national ornaments seemed to be of a very simple kind; they all had, both men and women, their ears pierced, and wore in these a simple piece of wood or quill ornament, painted. They also tattoo, but I only saw a few of them with these marks, and then on the chin only, with fine blue stripes running down from the corners of the mouth.

The first village we passed seemed very thickly inhabited, or else everybody was before his own door or upon the roof of his hut, where the men

were principally sitting, and seemingly enjoying the warm sun with a great deal of pleasure. They were nearly all naked, squatting with their backs together, and appearing not to take the least notice of the white passengers. But upon one hut four fellows, three naked, and one wrapped up in a fiery-red blanket, were stationed, who seemed to find peculiar amusement in our appearance, talking, and arguing with each other, and laughing. The women were nearly all busy, diving though, wherever they got a chance, away into their huts, as soon as the white strangers approached them. We saw a singular kind of ornament in one of these villages; it was a long pole, upon the upper part of which five or six very well-stuffed wild geese were fastened, just as if they were running up the pole with outstretched necks. Not speaking the language, I could not inquire of the natives for what purpose they had set up such a sign, for there was no wild goose hotel in the neighbourhood; but what I heard afterwards of the tribe makes me think it was a kind of national emblem, the favourite animal of the tribe, and as likely as not that from which the whole tribe derives its name, as other tribes in California are called Cayotas, and also in the Atlantic States the Wolves and Foxes.

One of our party, the elder Meyer, poor fellow, got a dreadful tooth-ache after we were a few days out, and in consequence of it a swelled face, but

such a face as I never saw before in my life; his head really seemed to be double its proper size, and his countenance was in fact most doleful. Tooth-ache is at the same time an extraordinary pain, as whoever has suffered from it, well knows. With some teeth cold water held to them, will ease the pain, while others cannot bear even the thought of it. Some teeth drive you nearly mad as soon as you apply salt to them, while I saw a lady only very recently, who put a whole pinch of table-salt right into the hollow tooth to deaden the pain. Some teeth require you to hold your head up, while others make you bend it down to let the blood rush to it, or even stand upon your head, sometimes in its worst paroxysms. This was the sort of tooth Meyer had, and the mad aching seemed to cease as soon as he held down his head, perhaps for half-a-minute, to the ground; and as much as we pitied the poor fellow, it was sometimes really impossible to refrain from laughing at his manœuvres.

The waggon road led right through the third Indian village that we reached; and following it, we entered the little town where the natives were sitting in their surly silence on the houses, only once in a while throwing a dark look upon the strangers who pressed in more and more, filling the country with their multitudes. Suddenly, right in the very centre of the place, and surrounded on

every side by the crowded huts—for tooth-ache never cares for place nor time—Meyer had one of his worst fits; and without even looking around to see where he was, he placed both his hands upon the ground, and dropping his head down as far as he could, he lifted—partly to bring the upper portion of his body farther forward, and partly to balance it—his right leg as high up as he could get it. The cap fell from his head, all the things he carried slipped forward over his shoulders, and the hanger caught in some fold or other, and was now standing, just as it had hung before, right upright in the air, increasing of course the oddity of the whole figure.

The effect which this posture had upon the indolent natives was extraordinary. At the first moment, a couple of women, who had been sitting close by, cleaning acorns, jumped up, dropped whatever they held in their laps, and ran as quickly as they could into their huts; and even the men rose up suddenly, looking in mute astonishment and wonder at the extraordinary stranger, who presented himself in the heart of their homes in such a peculiar, and perhaps hostile posture. The thick red face that now became visible between his arms and just above the ground, did not serve to reassure them; but when we ourselves could hold out no longer, but burst out, in spite of our compassion for the poor

fellow, into loud and perfect roars of laughter, they seemed to drop every idea of hostility on his part; and thinking, as likely as not, that the whole was only a performance which the kind stranger had got up for their own sole amusement, they also set up a perfect scream of delight; and the women on every side coming out of their caves again, and other natives jumping upon the nearest huts, we were surrounded in a few seconds by swarms of Indians, poor Meyer, with his dreadful pain and desperate posture, forming the centre of the merry crowd. At last, he rose up again, greeted this time by a perfect cheer; but he was not in the humour to favour the grinning savages with another performance, which they seemed really desirous to have, but throwing a wild and angry look around him, he shook his luggage in order and travelled on.

That same night, we had a light shower of rain, and the clouds began to look rather suspicious; if the rainy season really set in now, we were in a bad fix, and so it turned out. We had not marched three miles that morning, before a fine drizzly shower commenced, which grew harder and harder, and set in at last to a downright rain, which soaked us through in a few hours. Still we trudged on over a wide plain, fringed by the timber growth of the Bute creek, which we reached late that night. There would not have been the least chance of building any kind of camp when we

reached the first tree, for it was dark as pitch, and all of us were as cold and wet as if we had lain a day in ice-water, but fortunately there was a rancho here, "Neal's Range," as the Americans called it, and we found an old shed, under which a party of Americans had already camped, with a roaring fire on one side of it. Making room for us to lie down at least on the damp ground, we were able to boil that evening a cup of hot coffee, and stretch our limbs—our legs sticking out just under the drippings of the roof—in comparative shelter. That night a perfect storm set in, the wind howling through the gnarled limbs of the old oaks, and breaking down branches everywhere. Towards morning, however, the sky cleared; but Bute Creek was so swollen, that we should have had to swim if we wanted to cross; and not being in any such hurry, and rather inclined to rest a day, and dry our wet clothes, we decided on stopping here till next morning, and then continue our journey to the Reading diggings.

But our means of existence would soon become rather precarious, if we did not speedily reach some mines or other, and be able to work there. A part of our little company had had no money at all when we started, and buying mule, provisions, and tools had absorbed the funds of the rest. Every cent we had in cash on this very day, as we lay here under an old crazy shed in the middle of a wilderness,

with only a small stock of provisions left, consisted of four dollars and a half—about eighteen shillings —for six men, and provisions rose during the rain like mushrooms. Here we also found several parties coming down from the mines, and all of them seemed to have been in or near the Reading diggings, and gave us the worst description imaginable of them: provisions were cheap there, because everybody left who saw the possibility of selling what little he had; and though there was undoubtedly gold to be found, it lay in such scattered spots that it made it quite a matter of accident who might drop upon a small quantity, while many at the same time, and eighteen out of twenty, worked and worked just for their living, and it was even doubtful if they could make that, if a heavy snow-fall should set in, in those rather high and cold regions. Another point was the impossibility of getting away again, if winter really had set in; and from all we heard now—and which was, in fact, confirmed by several other parties who came in next day—it seemed as if our countryman, who had given us such a glowing description of the place, had had some interest in getting us there; very probably, a quantity of provisions he wanted to sell himself on the spot. I particularly inquired how game was up there, to have at least something to depend upon, if provisions became too dear; but in this we also found ourselves disappointed. Our

informants had lived several months in the mountains, some of them even hunters, but had not met a single grizzly bear, and very seldom deer. There was no dependence on that.

But what to do now? These men had a notion of going to Feather River mines, but they would not advise us to do so, for nobody could tell which place was the best; but the Feather River mines were assuredly the nearest, and our main object now was to get to a place where we could earn our living, as there was such a bad prospect of carrying out our former plans. In fact, we had no alternative left; and therefore determined, after a hurriedly-held council, on giving up the Reading mines, and starting direct for Feather River. To do this we had, however, to retrace our steps about ten miles, and then strike over to Feather River again, and cross this stream rather higher up than we had done the previous time.

But it seemed as if we should not get away so quickly from Bute's Creek as we had thought; for the second day we could not find our mule till late in the afternoon, and the third and fourth days it rained again as if the skies had sprung a leak, which could not be stopped in any way.

On Wednesday forenoon, when the rain was pouring down in torrents, the road consisting, in fact, of nothing else but a solid bed of mud,

ankle-deep, with holes in it, where the mules sank down sometimes to their girths, two waggons with emigrants came down the road, right across the Rocky Mountains, having left the States on the 1st of May. The poor people were from Missouri; and as they had lost all their animals but four on the road, they had to leave the greater part of their provisions and goods behind, to reach in safety a warmer climate, before the winter snows set in, and buried them in the icy heights. I felt truly sorry for the poor children (the mother lay sick in the first waggon), the poor things wet to the skin, and shivering in frost, were obliged to wade through mud and water behind the vehicle, as the two half-starved oxen were not able to drag any additional weight. The men stopped their waggons not far from our fire, to go into the house and inquire the road, and perhaps also to take a horn (a single dram cost fifty cents, or two shillings), and the little ones came round our fire to warm themselves. They were a boy of about eleven, a girl of nine, and another one of about seven years of age; and as we fortunately had some boiling water, I quickly made them a cup of coffee, which seemed to do them at least some little good.

When I expressed my pity for them, an American, who was standing by, remarked the children would not find it so great a hardship as the

parents did, as they frequently were used to such a life in their own country, where they had to go, sometimes in the worst kind of weather, four or five miles to school. The smallest of the children looked wistfully up into his face while he was speaking, and then said, with a deep sigh:

"Yes; but when we came home in the evening, mamma had a warm dress for us, and on the hearth we found warm food and hot coffee."

A couple of clear tears rose up into the poor little creature's eyes, when she thought of the scattered household gods of her own home; but she struggled nobly against the weakness, child as she was, and seemed to be ashamed of it, for she only held down her little head, while spreading her cold and tiny hands towards the blazing flame.

And gold—vile gold alone—had driven this man from his peaceful home, exposing his family to all the dangers and hardships of such a long and tedious journey—to the burning sun and the fevers of the plains, the icy winds and dangers of the snowy mountains. At the same time, he was not leaving a country where he had to toil on steadily in the sweat of his brow, under a hateful government perhaps, or held in poverty by an overburthened population; but he had quitted a free and happy country, where every man, without overworking himself, could earn his living, and

see his children grow up around him in peace and plenty: and if his wife, who lay sick in the cold and damp waggon, died on the road or in this country, could he ever again look his children in the face, whose mother he had killed? Could he ever be happy again?

Thousands of families have crossed the plains and Rocky Mountains, under similar circumstances, in hardship and misery; and hundreds of them were even now shut up in the snow, working away for their lives, only to reach the wet and swampy low lands; perfectly willing to brave anything they might meet there, that they might not starve and be frozen to death in those icy regions. And even before they reached the mountains, many families lost their father and leader, or the children their mother, the parents their offspring with whom they had started in pride and hope; and travellers told me there were parts of those plains where a man could never miss the road to the mines, if he only followed the graves.

That night we had to hunt up our mule again; and the younger Meyer, who really could not find his way through the woods for a hundred yards, succeeded—though I really could not comprehend how—in losing himself not a quarter of a mile from our camp, in an open plain, though he had not left the trees beneath whose shade the

rancho stood more than about four hundred yards. Without even a blanket, and not able of course to kindle a fire, he had the satisfaction of running all night round a tree, to keep himself warm and alive.

On Thursday morning we left this range, to strike to Feather River, and a bad and tedious march we had of it. On the road I tried to get within shooting distance of some herds of antelopes, but in vain; they were exceedingly shy and wild, and on the open plain, without even the smallest bush to hide and creep up to them, they had their sentinels posted in every direction, and at the first sight of man fled in wild disorder towards the mountains. I only shot a cayota, one of the little Californian prairie wolves; but could, of course, do nothing with it. It measured about four feet to the end of the bushy tail.

That night we camped on the banks of Feather River in a miserable spot which some of our party had chosen, while two of us had been out looking for antelopes. They had even collected no wood, except some green twigs, with which to boil a little water and smoke our eyes out. But here we entered for the first time the real mines; little tents and bush-covered huts everywhere met our sight, and when night set in, from all the slopes of the hills, from out the valleys and from the banks of the river, little lights glittered through the darkness, and

here and there large fires blazed up, showing the different places where the gold-searching population of the El Dorado had struck camp and dreamt their golden dreams. Though it rained that night again, as if heaven's gates were opened, we did not grumble; for had we not reached the mines at last? and was not the rest now, in comparison with all the hardships we had suffered, mere child's play? We all regarded the rain that night as if it belonged to the first impression of the gold district, but I could not help thinking of the old American, who had spoken to me when we were awaiting the 'Pomona's' boat, and said we were going to the mines to wash, though we had the probability of getting washed instead—and how true had the old fellow's words turned out! I fancied I saw him whistling down the streets, with his hands, or rather his arms in his pockets, up to his very elbows.

Next morning we were perfectly benumbed with cold and wet; at the same time, as our fire had been entirely put out by the rain, we could not even boil a cup of coffee, and determined on crossing the river before breakfast, and gain the other side of the stream, if the weather cleared up a little. At this part of the mines—the little place was called Long's Store—they had told us we should find a ferry, and so we did, but a singular-looking concern it was to go on board of. The

ferry consisted, in fact, of nothing but a simple waggon-body from some of the old Illinois or Indiana waggons, caulked and pitched as well as possible, and just able to carry four persons, but hardly their baggage. Four of us had to go over first, paying a quarter of a dollar a-head, then driving the mule in, it crossed in good style, and after this I followed with the young sailor and our baggage to bring up the rear. As the stream was here hemmed in by high and mighty rocks, a powerful current shot through the narrow valley with dangerous speed, and our craft was not in a fit state to give us a great deal of confidence, but each of us squatting in a corner and keeping her as quiet as possible and in good trim, while the boatman himself in the third, and the baggage in the fourth made up the balance, we pushed her out in the stream and the ferryman began paddling with all his might. All at once the water came oozing in, and we had not left the shore more than about fifteen yards, when it came in with a rush.

"She has sprung a leak," said our oars-man drily, and being used to it, I expect, he at the same time pulled her round with much dexterity, and ran her back upon a flat rock right below, which had served him, I am sure, many a time as a safe mooring-place. We had to bale her out now, and stuffing some old rags he carried with

him for the purpose into the leak, which was nearly half-an-inch wide, we started again, and this time reached the other shore, though nearly half-filled, and all our things wet.

As we paid one dollar and a half for ferrying, and had been obliged to buy some salt and fresh meat at Neal's Range, we had here—when we reached the other bank of the Feather River—e pluribus unum—just one dollar left in cash. One dollar left to keep six strong, healthy men alive—there was a prospect for a cashier. But what matter? were we not in the mines? had we not provisions for several days yet? and where was there cause to be disheartened? The rain, however, was disagreeable, it poured down all day; and hearing of some beautiful timber a little way farther up the river, where we could build a small hut or shanty, and cover it with split boards, we determined on trying to reach that part of the country as quickly as possible, to get at least under shelter, and be no longer exposed to a continually drenching rain.

On reaching the top of the hill we found an old Pennsylvanian, who showed us the first gold. He and his daughter had been washing the day before, and cleared nearly an ounce—as he said—and he thought the prospects in this quarter of the world very good. Down on the river we could also see several men at work, rocking away at their cradles,

and digging and picking the hard ground. The people led a busy life, and they seemed well satisfied with it, though I must confess I had thought it rather different from what I found it. Still it was only a first commencement, and gave little cause for grumbling as yet.

Next day we had some better weather; and as it was Sunday, we thought there would be no work going on in the mines, but the late excessive wet made the gold-finders stick to their cradles the first fair day they got to make up for lost time, and they were busy as bees along the whole bank of the stream. We saw them at work only along the banks of the little river, or in gravel-beds forming little islands in the low water. Throwing off the gravel till they came to a certain depth, they carried all this gravel, which contained some clayey ground to their cradles or machines, and rocked away; at most places only two worked together, as they had the water for washing to hand; on some places, I saw three with one cradle, and on a good many spots only one by himself, picking the ground, and carrying it to the water for washing it out, sometimes even with a common pan.

But here we could not stop; as we had no tent to lie under, and were not able to pay fifty or sixty dollars for one, we were obliged to go to a place where we could get timber, and the next day found us amongst the beautiful red-wood of

these mountains. But provisions had risen here to an extraordinary price, flour was seventy-five cents per pound, pork one dollar, salt also one dollar, and fresh meat fifty cents with, and seventy-five cents without the bone, and nothing else to be got. Never mind, we were at last on the very spot we had wanted to reach. Everywhere on the bank of the river we saw men at work, and little log-cabins were built up on every suitable place; therefore, marching up the river, after we had passed the last store, about two miles farther, and finding a really romantic spot under high towering pines and red-wood, we threw down our blankets, and struck camp.

Before all other things, even before getting under shelter, however much we needed it, we had to try to get a cradle, that while one part of our company went to work and washed out some gold to buy provisions with, the other should fell trees and build a small hut, to have at least a dry and comfortable place to sleep in. As the rainy season had set in in good earnest, we had not to look long for somebody who wanted to sell his traps and quit the mines, and since we no longer had any use for the mule, we made a bargain with two men, who worked a little way farther up the creek—one a Norwegian and the other an American—to exchange our mule for their cradle and tools and what few provisions they could spare. I also stopped with

them half-a-day to see them work the cradle, and get an idea how to hunt for gold, though the whole work looked to me so strange and wild that I did not see how it could require any judgment where everything seemed mere chance.

But I shall not tire the reader with a description of the washing itself, or the different tools and machines; all this has been described over and over again in England, and is far too monotonous to bear long explanations. I did not dig myself, for being the only one amongst us who could handle an axe, I went to work to fell a large red-wood, and split some boards for a roof, the other five, in the meantime, trying what they could do in the way of washing. We were full of hopes, for the least success would guarantee to us, not only our existence in the mountains through the winter, but also a good profit, and perhaps—for why not we as well as others?—some overgrown lumps of gold, of an indefinite number of pounds, troy weight—the heavier the better. We found ourselves very much disappointed in the course of time.

It rained continually: there was not a dry thread upon our backs, and even our blankets had become soaked and afforded no warmth. Provisions rose, of course, accordingly; and when the gold-diggers came to camp that evening, they brought with them about two dollars' worth of gold, and on sending one of them up to the store to buy provi-

sions with it, the storekeeper would not let us have flour under one dollar per pound, pork at a dollar and a quarter.

The next day, Thursday, the same game—no gold found, a trifle excepted, rain all day, and provisions rising again a quarter of a dollar the pound. The first tree I felled, too, would not answer: it looked well enough outside, but was mouldy and would not split, and I had to cut down another one; but the main instrument for splitting boards, a froe, was wanting, and I had to lose half-a-day in running about through the neighbourhood merely to find a man who owned one, and even that we could not keep, for the man himself expected his family up there in a few days (I pity the poor women who would be obliged to stop through a rainy season in these mountains), and had to set up, of course, a good and dry house first before they reached the place. In fact, everything went the wrong way, and the only thing that kept on regularly was the rain, which came down with unabated regularity, and provisions went up with every shower. At last we had not a single cent left to buy even the most necessary article of food, and we would not borrow. Our meals had become smaller every day, and only to fill our stomachs we began mixing our bread with a small kind of red berry, which grew around us in great profusion, and tasted well enough. As we could not

live much longer, and we all saw we must come to some decision, if our condition could not be altered, in one way or the other, we agreed finally that the next day should be decisive, whether we stopped any longer up here (where there was, in fact, no chance at all of provisions coming up again this winter, if the weather continued as it was), or start back for Sacramento and San Francisco, and give up mining altogether, for this season at least. The gold-diggers wanted therefore, to try, for the last time, a new plan, and I myself, as there seemed no chance of getting a froe for the next three or four days, shouldered my gun to take a walk over the hills, and try if I could not come across a deer, or perhaps an old grizzly bear, and get a quantity of meat.

Nothing at all succeeded, our gold-diggers got this day less than ever, provisions rose up that evening to two dollars for a pound of flour, and the same price for pork—the storekeeper seeming even quite diffident about selling it at present, when he had a chance of getting more; and I myself, upon my hunting trip, saw only a single deer, and that out of the range of my gun. I could not find even tracks, and the hills really seemed as if every particle of game had been killed, or driven away.

That night we had hardly anything to eat, and it rained frightfully; but if we had had any doubt

what course to follow under such circumstances, some Americans who passed our camp early next morning, would have solved it. They had everything they called their own, and which they could carry, upon their backs, leaving, as they said, a neighbourhood, where there would be a famine in a few days, if all stopped there. Again we held a general council, and the result of it was that we packed up our things, and that same morning, the 18th of November, with the first rays of sun, we started, heavily loaded upon our back track.

But we most certainly did not intend to carry all the things we were burdened with at present to the lowlands again; therefore, on reaching the first store on the hills, where a Missouri man had commenced keeping a warehouse, as he called it, we made a bargain with him, and sold him all our tools and part of the cooking utensils, the younger Meyer even his rifle, and the older his hanger, for cash, and went on our way with a very light load and in the best possible temper, down into the valley. We had found no gold; but what matter? we were all healthy yet, and had seen the mines at least—the next time better luck—and laughing and talking we clambered down the steep ridges till night overtook and found us round a large fire and a splendid panful of most excellent dumplings, which Huhne, a very good hand at such things, had

prepared to get our rather weakened stomachs into good working order again. That night, though, we tasted, in spite of the dumplings, the pleasures of mountain-life again in bumpers.

At about ten o'clock, it commenced raining, and never left off for a single minute during the whole night. Next morning we had to get up in the rain, kindle a fire again, and cook our breakfast; and after that, wringing out our heavy blankets, we rolled them up once more, and slinging them over our shoulders, marched on. Next night we had to lie down in the soft and perfectly liquid mud, not a dry spot was to be found in the whole neighbourhood; but it did not rain, and that was some comfort. We had our worst time two days afterwards; for on reaching Feather River again, on the banks of which the ground was high and dry, and travelling comparatively easy, we arrived after another night's hard rain, which we passed, however, under a roof, at a small slew or branch, which had grown now to a perfect torrent, and run right across our path. This we had to cross; but finding it deeper than we first thought, our only chance was a raft to take our things over, and then drag it with those upon it, who did not know how to swim across. As no large timber grew there, we carried a parcel of old and half-burnt logs to the water's-edge, and tying them together with all the small pieces of twine

we possessed, we really made a sort of raft, which we thought would carry all our things. We worked at this for about three hours, the rain coming down at the same time as hard as it could, and the two Meyers and Kunitz standing, while the other three were wading about in the water, and carrying and floating the old logs, shivering with cold, and ready to give up nearly everything in despair. At last we were prepared for a trial, and fastening a rather weak fishing-line I had in my pocket, as a tow-line, to our clumsy craft, I waded into the water, and when I felt it getting too deep to walk, cried to the others to push the raft after me, while I struck out for the other shore.

It was no go; the logs were too heavy, and sunk under water before it had got even out of reach of the young sailor, who wisely followed it to see how it would answer, and as the weight was too great for the line, it broke, and catching at the same moment round my left arm and both my feet, it was all I could do to reach the other shore with my right arm; satisfied at finding that they had at least got hold of the raft again on the other side, and were pulling it in. Swimming back, I helped them to pull our soaking wet things out of the water, when our sailor-boy, who had noticed the rising of the creek, told us to make haste with whatever we wanted to do, for in the next quarter

of an hour, we should have just such another slew on our other side, and we were even on a little island already, for the streamlet had risen in the last half-hour more than six inches. Some Americans, who also wanted to cross, and had been looking at us for a good while, to see what success we had, hurried back, and on reaching the other channel, shouted to us to make haste and follow them, for the log we had crossed over on was nearly under water already.

We had no choice left, for though there would have been very little difficulty in crossing with Huhne and the sailor, we should have had to leave the others; and not being willing to do that we caught up our luggage, which was as heavy as lead now through the water, and turned back. And in fact it was high time; the powerful current nearly swept us away, and though we all reached the shore safely, we were all but dead with cold and wet.

That night we camped again in the house where we had stayed the previous one with one of our countrymen, at least under a dry roof, but with hardly any firewood; and the reader may think what a night we passed. Our provisions consisted at the same time of a small piece of fat pork and one biscuit a-piece, eleven of us crowding round a small pile of little more than hot

embers. We saw the effects of this day's work next morning; for the sailor, whom I had thought the hardiest of the whole of us, but who had complained the previous night of headache and drowsiness, was attacked by a swelling in his feet, so that he could not wear his boots, and pain in the gums, indicating the first signs of scurvy.

Not being able to cross the slough, which had become a perfect torrent, sweeping everything before it, we heard of a whale-boat which had come up Feather River. Some of those staying with us at the hut declared their intention of crossing to the other shore of the river, there being not so many sloughs and swamps in following the river's course, as on this side. The only difficulty seemed the price; the Yankee, who saw well enough that a party of travellers were in a fix, asking two dollars per head to take us across. We had to pay it, however; and taking our sick man over also, we walked on slowly and tediously with him. For the first two or three hours he was able to walk at least by himself, while I carried his baggage; but afterwards even that seemed impossible, and I had to lead him slowly along.

On Friday we reached Captain Sutter's farm, on Feather River; it was the first truly cultivated

spot I had seen in California, and it looked to me really like home. I was getting tired of lying out in the wet every night; I longed for warm and clean clothing and civilized nourishment, and the tiles on the roof, the window panes; the clean and open yard, with its ploughs and other instruments, the homely looking curtains to the windows, and even flower-pots, recalled to my memory long past scenes, which rains and flood seemed nearly to have washed out of my memory.

Fortunately, I found Mr. Sutter, for whom I had brought to California a chest of books from a friend of his in Germany, at home; and was received by him in a most friendly manner, though I looked most certainly more like a swamped vagabond than anything else. But people up here are accustomed to see persons return from the mines in just such outrigs, and find nothing uncommon or extraordinary in it, though I am sure if I had shown myself in that state in any of our German towns, the police-officers would have taken care of me directly. But I was sorry at not being able to accept even the captain's hospitable invitation to dinner, as much as I needed a good meal once again; for our sick man did not allow us to delay any longer; he wanted rest, and, if possible, medicines, and the sooner we got him into Sacramento, the better. Captain Sutter, however, when he

saw we were determined on starting, loaded us with provisions for several days.

Captain Sutter is a well-set, stout, and healthy-looking man, of about forty-five years of age, with a large moustache — a remembrance of former times. He was the first of all in the mines, in fact, who had power and provisions—two extraordinary things at that time—and through his proximity to the first gold mine, only had to pick up the lumps as they fell. He owned, at the same time, immense tracts of land, and part of them, as Sacramento city, in the most advantageous positions; but being too good-hearted, he was misused by most of those he had been kind to, and he even commenced having his troubles with the land; the American squatters settling on it, whenever they thought fit, and caring little or nothing, whether they were in the right or not, so long as they kept the land. The state of things was far too unsettled as yet, and the transition from a wild to a civilized condition, far too rapid and unnatural.

During our stay on the farm, the younger Meyer was taken ill, or at least attacked by weakness; he fainted right down in the yard, looking for the rest of the day ghastly pale, but recovered sufficiently to enable us to continue our journey, though rather slowly, that same morning.

I really do not know how we should have got

on during the next day, for it proved all we could do as it was to proceed a few miles with our sick man—and he became worse during the night—had it not been for a horse and cart which overtook us that night at our camping place, and belonged to two of our countrymen, who offered to take the sick man in their cart as far as they went, nearly to the little town of Vernon, on the Sacramento River. Next morning we helped him on board, and were able then to travel as fast as we pleased along the high and dry beaten path of the river bank. That night the rayotas favoured us with a perfect serenade; they howled round our camp in a most doleful manner, sometimes within a stone's throw of us somewhere in the bushes, and their screaming and yelling during a part of the night rendered it impossible to do more than shut our eyes. The noise lasted nearly the whole night, but the little things are not dangerous, and will never attack a man even when collected in large bodies.

The land down here was a perfect plain, with timber only on the edge of the river, forming a small wooded bottom crossed by many slews. A great part of this plain was now, after the heavy rains, under water, though I do not doubt that some well-dug ditches would easily have drained it off; but here and there the thickly-growing toolas, a kind

of thick, fleshy rush, showed real swamps, and as most of these had been burnt off during the summer, it gave the country a really doleful and black aspect. The slews we had to cross were fortunately not deep, for we had dry weather, at least the last two days, and these creeks fall just as fast as they rise.

About dinner time we reached Vernon, the older Meyer also growing ill, or at least so weak, that he could not walk any longer. Very probably the sight of a whale-boat, just about to start from here for Sacramento, did much to make him think so, but it being at the same time desirable to have somebody with our sick sailor, we took passage for the two—with nearly the last money we had—the paasage being five dollars for each of them, a distance they could run down with the current in about three or four hours.

That night we camped for the first time again on the Sacramento River, and next day, Monday, the 26th of November, reached Sacramento city, where we found our sick man taken to a boarding-house, stretched out on his blanket at least under the dry roof of a tent.

And here we were, after a winter's excursion to the mines, not washers but washed, as that old American had prophesied only too truly, but we were not in a mood to be sorry about any-

[redacted]

CHAPTER III.

SACRAMENTO CITY.

BUT what a difference there was between the Sacramento of four weeks before and now. When we came here before the rainy season, how busy, how lively the streets were—five or six schooners at one time discharging cargo on the banks; waggons pressing around it to get their loads and start for the mines. People in the streets even ran sometimes at full speed, not to lose their valuable time; merchants meeting at the corners exchanged a few hurried words, and on they went again to attend to their business. Where a man showed himself idling, he was sure of having twenty inquiries, one after the other, "If he did not want work, and what he could do?" There was even a premium paid to those who could get good workmen for the different schooners or other places of business. Each man you spoke with had his own plans, and generally wanted hands to help him in accomplishing them.

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[redacted] I accepted that afternoon before a boat, where a Yankee was selling a quantity of rifles and pistols by auction, and was astonished at hearing the sums he all but gave them away for. Small pistols were sold for a dollar and a half the pair, and good-looking American rifles, that must cost eight or ten dollars at least in New York, for three and four. In fact, things had altered in a most extraordinary manner, for an immense num-

ber of workmen seemed to have been thrown, by the rainy season, back upon the towns, and everybody, wherever we inquired, told us the same tale—it was nearly an impossibility now to get any work at all in the place.

Although provisions were a great deal cheaper here than in the mines, they maintained, notwithstanding, a very good price; and in the boarding-houses they asked three dollars and a half per day for board and lodging—calling lodging the cover of the roof, for you had to sleep upon the floor in your own blankets. A single meal was one dollar and a quarter. For us to live at such a rate, without being able to get employment, was entirely out of the question: our sick man had to be placed in comfortable lodgings, as far as they could be got up here; and though it was possible to pay such a sum for one man, we could never have managed it for more.

The two brothers Meyer, however, determined on going down to San Francisco with the first steamer, where they had money and friends to pay their passage afterwards; while Huhne and myself gave our sick man in charge of the hostess, a little kind-hearted Pennsylvanian woman, and leaving all our things in the tent as a kind of security, we shouldered our blankets to look for work of some sort or another. After having tried in vain for this purpose nearly every house in Sacramento,

we went four miles farther down the river to Somersville, but without any better success; and hearing that an old Dutchman lived on the other side of the Sacramento, an old settler and owner of an immense tract of country, we determined on going and seeing him, as we were told he had a good many wood-cutters in his employ.

Mr. Swartz, as the Americans called him, was fortunately at home: and from the description of all his possessions in land and cattle that I had heard at Sacramento, I had thought him an immensely rich gentleman. The reader may judge, therefore, of our astonishment when we reached the spot, and found, instead of a comfortable building—house and garden and farmyard, as I had most certainly expected—a low dirty hovel, and Mr. Swartz himself suiting the place exactly, and sitting, a great deal farther than three sheets in the wind, before a couple of bottles of most abominable gin. But he was a character, and on hearing him talk, I really did not know at first, and in fact could not guess, what language he spoke, though I understood the sense of what he said; and it was not till after about half an hour's conversation, and when the ear had got accustomed to the strange sounds and words, that I found he was talking a most wonderful mixture of his own, composed of Dutch, English, and German, and a vague suspicion arose at the same time in my

mind that some Indian words slipped in between the rest—Huhne, in fact, thought he was speaking Indian entirely. As it seemed, he had formed this dialect for his own accommodation, for continually having around him representatives of these different nations, it would have been a perfect torment to talk to them all in their different tongues. In this mixture, however, each of them could find words enough of his own language to serve him, and those who lived with him proved, through their understanding this composition, his practical invention had acquired his language, which in the end came to the same thing.

That evening an Englishman came to see Mr. Swartz on some business, and I had a fair chance of hearing the old Dutchman (but he belonged to the lowest class of that nation) in the full flow of his eloquence, and admiring his philology. When he commenced playing upon the stranger that part of his lingo which had the most English words in it, the latter started and looked at him; then after listening a little while with really painful attention, he seemed to understand a part of what was said to him, and answered accordingly; but finding at last that it would not do, he asked Mr. Swartz to talk English with him, "he didn't understand Dutch enough, though some words really sounded very much like English."

Mr. Swartz, without being the least disconcerted,

and having expended all the English upon him that he could muster, commenced now in what he himself called his own language. For a few minutes the conversation was maintained in this, but it seemed worse than ever for the poor Englishman, who sat there with his mouth open and staring at the speaker, giving it up at last in despair, and begged Mr. Swartz, with an apology, to speak Dutch again, as he had done before, as he could understand that a "leetle" better than the English.

But in spite of Mr. Swartz's originality, he had no work for us, having, as he told us next morning—for that night he seemed more inclined to drink than to talk—already a very large quantity of wood stacked up on his lands, awaiting the boats to take it down to San Francisco; if that sold well, he would have no objection to cut some more, but not before.

What to do now we did not know, but going back to Sacramento, and grumbling about the miserable state of business at present, we heard of some wood-cutters in the bottom lands between Suttersville and Sacramento city; and leaving the road to see what work those men did, and how they got paid for it, we followed a small path leading through the timber, and soon found ourselves in the very midst of the wood-choppers, who were felling trees on all sides, managing things, as it

seemed, upon their own hands, and setting up cord-wood "on their own hook," as they said.

As we soon learned, all these men were cutting trees down on Uncle Sam's territory, not caring a straw who might claim the ground, or the trees upon it, though a great many did. Oak-wood was worth at this time about fifteen dollars a cord in Sacramento city; carriage was eight dollars the cord, for a distance of hardly two miles on a perfect level road; so there was about seven dollars left for the wood itself, certainly a very fair price, for a good workman could set up a cord very easily in a day. On inquiring, we learnt from the wood-cutters themselves that wood was a very good article at present, there being not the least danger in the world of our not selling the cord for cash, if we only first set it up, and we were sure of getting seven dollars; but even if we did not wish to run the risk, we could get five dollars and a half from some of the wood-cutters themselves here.

There was a chance! Bidding good-bye to the friendly fellows who had given us such good advice, we hastened towards town, to commence our work as soon as possible, not to get too much in debt through our sick man, and even found, before we left the bottom, an Englishman, who had some hands employed in wood-cutting, and wanted us to set up for him three cords, seven dollars a cord; he

even offered to lend us an axe at first starting. In town I took my gun into an iron-ware room, and left it there as security for another axe with a handle, the handle alone costing two dollars, the axe two and a half; and at it we went in good earnest.

The first few days we got on very slowly. Huhne, never having handled an axe in his life, had to learn first how to use it to best advantage and without danger to himself, for an axe is an awkward and a dangerous tool for a raw hand to handle; but on the third day we had sat up a cord and a half between us, and commenced earning money instead of getting deeper into debt every day.

But who were the real owners of this soil and wood? Nobody knew—in fact, nobody cared—at least, among the wood-cutters themselves, though there were in Sacramento city several Americans who claimed a right to the soil, and even stuck up printed bills on the trees, all over the bottom, warning the wood-cutters, and assuring them of heavy fines if they persevered in their unlawful deeds. The wood-cutters did not molest these bills, but cut down the trees on which they were pasted, and fastened them in derision upon their own cords.

I do not know how it was with the land at that time, and in fact very few men did, but I have not the least doubt it had been taken up by somebody,

and probably everything done to secure him in after-time the ownership, when things commenced becoming a little better regulated; but as it was now, nobody knew who was master or who servant, and squatters commenced knocking up small cabins or shantees everywhere, and claiming the nearest hundred and sixty acres by the American right of pre-emption.

At the same time, a meeting was held in Sacramento, the squatters' meeting, as they called it, against the unlawful, unnatural claims of land-owners. Large bills were posted all over town, and on the appointed evening an immense log-fire was kindled on the bank of the Sacramento, just opposite the City Hotel, where a kind of scaffold was also erected for the speakers, with a large American flag waving over it.

I was of course present, warming my back among the multitude against the immense fire, and listening, at the same time, to the unripe, unpractical speeches of mere boys, who got up and spoke for hours of things they knew nothing about. The mob—for I really do not know another name for it—had neither law nor reason on its side in claiming pieces of ground which had had a rightful owner even before they ever thought of going to California, for they denied Sutter himself the right of possessing property in Sacramento city, while they claimed it for themselves; but the truth

was, they wanted a property, a piece of ground here of their own, which they did not like stealing openly; and in order to have now a so-called just excuse for the deed, they brought forward the old nonsense of the common American stump-speeches, which you can hear in the States at election-time fifty times a-day. Boys, whose beards had never seen the first razor, climbed up upon the speakers' bench, the third word they uttered being the "glorious flag," and the fourth sentence "the blood their forefathers had shed to maintain their rights," repeating over and over again old stories nobody thought of denying or contradicting; and a party of loafers standing at a distance round the fire, only near enough to hear the loudly-screamed catchword, would then break out in halloos and hurrahs that frequently lasted five minutes.

The glorious flag received that night at least thirty times three, and even three times three more cheers, and hip, hip, hip, hurrahs, just according to circumstances, and the speakers took the greatest pains imaginable to prove the honour of the flag under which they sought to hide their own illegal actions.

Finally, they came to a resolution that the rights and claims of the so-called landowners—viz., Sutter and others who had thought up to that time they were really proprietors, were null and void, and each citizen of the United States

could squat down now on any piece of ground he saw fit, and claim his quarter-section, as a commencement.

To meet such unjust demands with the same weapons, the landowners also held a meeting in one of the hotels; but the squatters—that is, all the loafers from the neighbourhood—in order to prove, I fancy, that they were also free and independent citizens, forced an entrance, and broke up the meeting by howling and hissing. But every nation has its fair share of scoundrels.

Next evening there was another squatter meeting; and nearly every night there was some tumult or noise in the street. At the same time, Captain Sutter had a bill posted in Sacramento, by his agents, Brannan and Co., warning all the squatters against building huts and tents between two certain streets in Sacramento city, as Captain Sutter himself, the first squatter, had claimed that soil as his one hundred and sixty acres, and everybody who continued there in spite of the warning, would have to pay a very heavy rent.

Things went on in this way for a good while, till after I left Sacramento city, when one day the independent squatters became rather too independent, and shooting the sheriff, who was sent out to restore order, down from his horse, the citizens themselves rose up against them, and scattered them over the country.

Only the wood-cutters profited by this unsettled state of landed property, for nobody troubled them—in fact, nobody was certain about the boundaries of particular claims, or about the claims themselves; and even those who pretended to own the land, bought their wood from the wood-cutters, or sent some hands out themselves to cut down whatever they needed, and wherever they could get it.

But while we were working here, out in the woods, we wanted some kind of shelter; the last few nights had been clear, but clouds were again rising in the west, and we therefore determined on building a kind of ground-hole or hut, with every comfort bush and earth could offer. Digging accordingly into the slope of the bank, to get a back wall and a fire-place, we set up a quantity of poles, about ten feet long, with their ends together, all resting in the middle upon a centre pole or rafter, supported by two large forks, in the shape of a tent, and covering the whole first with a thick layer of bushes, and afterwards, Indian fashion, with hard-beaten ground, we soon had our winter residence in order. Before the entrance we hung up an old oil-cloth of mine, and the fire-place being finished off with an old flour-barrel, with both ends knocked out, and a piece of plank fastened as a mantel-piece over the fire, we lay that night, while the rain poured down, as dry as if we

had had the best tile roof over us. It is true the hut we had raised was poor enough, and damp and dirty: in Germany I would have thought twice about even letting my Newfoundland dog sleep in it; but here, it was a palace, after what we had suffered during the last four weeks; and a bottle of champagne in the grandest party of the Old World never tasted so good to me, or was imbibed with so much relish, as the whiskey-toddy Huhne and I drank that evening in celebration of our entrance into that low and damp hovel.

Our sick sailor-boy had improved a little by rest and good living, but not enough to be out of danger, and I wanted to speak to a doctor about him. There was one of our countrymen at the time in Sacramento city, a Dr. Irmler, just arrived from Germany, and our little apothecary went to see him on behalf of the sick man. Mr. Irmler though wanted a house built; and after examining the patient, he told him he had the scurvy, and must have a bottle of his medicine, price four dollars; without that, he would go to the grave, and there was no help for him; but, as he was poor, he would give him the medicine gratis, if he would stay with him, and help him to build his house.

And this mean fellow, who asked a man who really died hardly eleven days afterwards, to work for him, and receive in payment a bottle of his

quack medicine, called himself a German doctor. I would not have grudged him the "doctor," but I really felt ashamed of his being a German.

At the same time, the landlord of the boarding-house—also a German—declared he could not keep the sick man in his tent, because he drove away his healthy customers, who were much more profitable to him; for of course the invalid was not allowed to drink spirituous liquors, except a glass of wine sometimes. But that was not all: no other boarding-house in town would receive him, though I went from house to house, boarding being, in fact, the same price with all of them—three dollars and a half a day. The proprietors of one of the gambling-houses at last offered to give him a place in their loft; but there was a continual noise of a couple of trumpets, horns, and drums, kept up in it from ten o'clock in the morning till sometimes twelve and one o'clock at night, and no healthy man could have stood it, much less a sick one. At last, some Germans, who had come over with him in the same vessel, offered him a place in their tent, where he had at least a shelter, while he could get from the boarding-house close by what food he needed.

These three Germans were musicians, and they had made an agreement with a proprietor of one of the gambling-houses to play there in the morning two or three, and in the evening four hours;

one of them played the flute exceedingly well, the other two accompanied him on the guitar. How they executed their pieces seemed, in fact, all the same, as the Americans said themselves they only wanted a noise; and as these hells in some streets stood house by house, or rather tent by tent, the reader may judge what a deafening mass of sounds continually floated through the air.

By Monday, the 10th of December, Huhne and I had paid all our own and the sick man's debts; and knowing him to be in good hands for at least the next one or two weeks, I determined on going down to San Francisco, and accepting the friendly invitation of some fellow-passengers, the Messrs. von Witzleben, who had established a brewery on the Mission Dolores, about three miles distant from San Francisco. At the same time, I could find a place for our sailor, who would get well, I had not the least doubt, as soon as he could obtain good medicine and the necessary accommodations. But he needed none of them long, for I had hardly left Sacramento city when he died. Poor fellow! how were the dreams now realised with which he had come to this golden land? A small cold grave was dug for him, and far away from his home and friends he sleeps in the ground it had been his ambition to reach.

CHAPTER IV.

MISSION DOLORES.

THE steamer I went down with to San Francisco was the 'Senator,' one of the largest, and, in fact, the largest boat, then running either on the Sacramento or Joaquin River. The passage was a trip of about sixteen hours, and cost twenty-five dollars, without bed or food. Those boats gained an immense quantity of money at that time, and they were always crowded with passengers and freight.

We reached San Francisco late in the evening in very bad weather, so we had to drop our anchor, and wait till daylight to thread our way through the shipping. That night a storm raged, several vessels were wrecked outside the harbour, and in town three or four houses fell down. People even talked of some shocks which they had felt like an earthquake, but I slept all night as soundly as possible under one of the cabin-tables, rolled up in my blanket, and only woke when the rattling of the heavy

chain on deck told me that day had dawned. We dropped anchor again near the wharf, and had to pay another dollar per head to be carried over to the landing.

But what a change had come over San Francisco. I had left tents, and low huts, and shantees, only two months before, and there were now regular streets of high wooden, and even here and there, brick buildings; but if the habitations had improved, the streets had become proportionately worse. In October, not a drop of rain had fallen, and the streets were hard and dry. Now they seemed to be only a liquid and moving mass of soft, chocolate-coloured mud. In going from one house to another you had to wade through it, and crossing a street seemed a matter of life and death. Many places became really impassable, and in Clay and Montgomery Street, mules were several times drowned in the middle of the road. Necessity, however, is the mother of invention, and the inhabitants of San Francisco had commenced forming a perfectly new kind of *trottoir*, so that they could pass where these had been laid, in a comparatively dry state, from one house to another. These consisted of small pieces of wood —old staves decidedly having the preference— which were fastened upon cross-pieces that rested on piles. In such places a man could walk dry, and with the pleasant feeling of having a sure footing

as long as they lasted; but they did not do much good as yet, for where they ended, you had to jump down in the mud again, and deliver yourself, without discretion, to the mercy of the softest place you could pick out from above. No wonder high water-boots cost, at that time, as much as two hundred dollars a pair; and one hundred and twenty dollars was, for several months, the regular price.

San Francisco seemed also to be crowded with labourers, who had sought the shelter of the town, preferring a smaller, but surer gain to the uncertain toil of gold-digging in the wet mountains. But San Francisco also offered them a larger field, the town itself employing a great many labourers in improving, as far as they could, the state of the streets, and the shipping required a good many hands.

But as I did not intend to go to work again, as I had done in Sacramento, when I was obliged to provide for the sick man, I changed, before all other things, my dress—and I could have called it more properly rags—for dry clothing, and then went out to the Mission Dolores, which lay about three miles distant from the city and towards the south, upon the small strip of land which forms a kind of long peninsula between the Bay of San Francisco and the Pacific Ocean. The road led at that time through a perfect desert of sandy hills,

partly overgrown with low, stunted oaks and laurels; and the mission itself, as the old church and about twenty or twenty-five low stone huts were called, seemed to be chiefly inhabited by Spaniards and Indians. Only here and there Americans had commenced settling among them, without having built as yet a single house of their own. They only paid a rent for what they inhabited to the Spaniards or Californians, and therefore the whole place had nearly entirely retained its original character.

The Mission Dolores, or the original building which contained the church and the habitation of the priests, was an old crazy adobe building, and had, when gold was first discovered in California, been almost uninhabited, except by some Indians, who lived, or rather camped, in the old dark and damp rooms, using them, at the same time, for parlour and stable. But if one of those old priests who sleep their long, long sleep in the little graveyard of that once so lonely place beneath crumbling mound and a half-rotten head-board in the form of a cross, should get up now and see what a change only a few years—ay, even months —have brought over the sanctuary of former days, would he not clasp his bony hands in mute astonishment and dread at the sacrilege the worse than heathens had committed in this holy building.

The reader may picture to himself a large mass of adobe walls, forming a square of closely-connected houses about two hundred and fifty yards each way, with a large open court-yard in the centre. The church decidedly formed the main or, at least, most prominent part of the whole building. It was a high, lofty room, with a couple of rough pillars of unburnt bricks as a kind of ornament on both sides of the entrance, the altar covered with all manner of bouquets, and wreaths, and figures of saints and martyrs. The priest himself had been, up to the golden time nearly, the sole occupant of the whole building; but speculative Yankees, as well as other foreigners, were now taking possession of a large part of the formerly unoccupied rooms; and spreading farther and farther, as they needed more room, or thought they could claim it, the priest was crowded back into three or four small rooms, while the rest of the building had found as motley a group of occupants as any church could desire.

Opposite to the priest's rooms, three Germans, whom I mentioned before, rented a part of the wing for their brewery, using the garret or loft to keep their barley and malt in; while even a part of this garret, only divided from the malt-loft by a piece of stretched calico, was occupied as an hospital, under the care of some Argentine doctor. The

sick up here were nearly all Mexicans or Spaniards from Chili, the Argentine republic, and other old Spanish colonies, who filled the loft with their groans and the graveyard with their bodies. Close to the brewery there was an hotel, or rather boarding-house, where dances were held twice every week, or at least every Sunday evening, this hotel being connected with an older grog-shop and gambling-house round the corner, with the sign of the Bull's Head. Besides this, there were in the front part of the building, five or six private habitations.

As the people squatted everywhere on Mission land, the priest had gone to law about it, claiming all that district around there as church ground, but even that would do him no good. He lost his law-suit, and disappeared entirely one morning from his lodgings, never to be seen again at the Mission Dolores.

The Mission is situated very prettily on the head of a little bay, which juts in here from the large one towards the coast range, having a most excellent and good entrance, and some good landing-places for boats, though the channel is rather shallow at low water, and could not be passed at lowest tide by loaded boats. There is a splendid view towards the opposite coast, with a part of the cultivated land on this shore, a small sheet of water of the large bay itself visible, and the high

opposite coast, one part of the ridge being crowned with a thicket of splendid cedar or redwood-trees, and Mount Davidson with its snowy peak peering over it. The hills round the Mission itself—at least those between the sea-coast and the southern pass—are entirely naked, only covered with fine grass after the rainy season had set in; but towards San Francisco, the sandy undulating ridges are generally covered, as I said before, with stunted oaks of a dark-green colour, through which the white sandy bottom shines out afar. The sea itself was about four miles distant, and we could plainly hear the breakers as they threw themselves in sport and anger against the rocky, rugged coast.

After finishing in the room of the old crazy building, my correspondence for Germany, I had plenty of time to look about; and my special wish was to see and become acquainted with the habits of Californians, or Spaniards, themselves, as the Americans called them. The fandango seemed to me, in this respect, the most national amusement, and I visited it several times; but I must acknowledge my expectations were disappointed. There may exist different kinds, though I never saw any other but that one, which seemed to me rather a monotonous and dull affair—young ladies walking and gliding about with downcast eyes and

ning steps, and putting down their pretty little

feet as carefully as if they were stepping among eggs, and did not want to break them. The musicians and spectators alone—just those parties who, in our country, keep cool while others dance —seemed to grow excited; the guitar-players, who nearly always sing the melody at the same time, and seem to be also improvisatores, adapting the words to the persons who happen to be on the floor, screaming themselves into a perfect excitement, while the spectators applaud, and laugh, and stamp, and scream in pure delight till some particularly admired lady steps into the ring and is received with loud and admiring bravos, the players then always commencing a much livelier tune.

But the spectators do not content themselves with mere acclamations. They have a far more practical way of showing their admiration to the lady, for they throw money into the ring to her. Half-dollars and dollars, even ounces, I have seen thrown to some very favourite young lady, who is then obliged to pick up the coins herself, for it would be the greatest insult to the donor if she allowed any one else to do it for her.

They have other strange customs with this fandango, for instance, the egg-breaking between Shrove Tuesday and Easter. I was standing one night with the rest, looking at a couple of young girls — neighbours of ours — who were really

moving about with much ease and grace, while an old Spaniard, the brother of our nearest neighbour, whom we used to call on that account, "the brother-in-law," had already screamed himself hoarse in pure delight, when suddenly a young Californian, the owner of a large rancho not far from San José, who was standing close by my side, reached out his arm as one of the girls came in the dance near us, and crushed something upon her head, I could not see what it was, but I could hear it break. The señorita, however, did not seem to mind it at all; but on feeling the touch, and without stopping the dance for a moment, she merely bent her head slightly forwards, and something, whatever it was, glided down her smoothly-combed hair; and while she passed her handkerchief lightly over her head, she moved, with a smile, over to the other side of the ring. The thing itself had fallen down before me, and I was rather astonished on beholding nothing more nor less than a raw egg—most certainly a singular way of showing a lady your admiration. These eggs frequently are emptied, then filled with eau-de-Cologne, and cemented again at both ends, and our señorita took her revenge in a similar manner. The dance was not concluded, and two other señoritas were just stepping up to continue the same fandango, when I felt my arm slightly and carefully touched. On slowly turning my head, I

saw the young lady, who motioned to me to make a little room for her, not to be noticed. I left my neighbour as softly as I could, and while she reached up and disappeared, nearly at the same moment, behind some others, who stepped directly into their old places, the young ranchero cried out loudly, and rather in pain than pleasure, for the sharp eau-de-Cologne had run down into his eyes, and he was laughed at into the bargain.

Another jest, also a kind of politeness, or rather courtship to ladies, is the rather indelicate cap-stealing. If a lady is dancing, somebody tries to steal unobserved, behind a spectator, and grasp his cap, which before the owner, who runs after it, can recover it, is placed upon the head of the dancing and probably favourite lady. From that moment the owner is not allowed to touch it again till the dance is finished, and then he is obliged to ransom it for at least a dollar.

That same evening some Spaniard took the cap from the head of a young Dutch sailor—a smart little fellow, who knew very well he would have to pay a dollar for the joke; and calculating in his mind that he could get a new China cap for the same amount in town, he tried to slip away, and leave the lady with the old cap in her lap. But other eyes watched him; and as that would have been the greatest insult to the lady, the poor

fellow had hardly displayed his evil intention, when he saw himself surrounded by a crowd of threatening faces, and he had no choice but to buy his old cap back again from the smiling beauty. California is the land for money at any rate.

Easter came in the meantime, and the Spaniards made great preparations everywhere, on Easter Sunday even having a fandango in church; and afterwards Judas Iscariot (an old stuffed figure, to dress which, they had stolen all the clothing they could get from heretics, and the gentleman also had a handkerchief of mine round his neck) was tied to a newly-caught wild mare, and chased and driven through the settlement, amidst the screaming halloos and shouts of wild Indians, and even wilder Christians.

The principal person in this festivity was a Californian Indian, Valentin, the best horseman and lasso-thrower even among the Spaniards, and as fine a specimen of an Indian as I ever saw. He was tall and rather slender, but, notwithstanding, stoutly built, with the long black and smooth hair of his tribe, and dark glowing eyes. I never saw him on foot but when he was drunk, and pity for him that happened so often; but as he was the best hand in the neighbourhood in tracking a runaway horse or stray cattle, and bringing them in dead or alive, if he had once undertaken it, everybody nearly required his services, and they all

knew brandy was the best recompense for them—the cheapest to the giver, and the most pleasant to the receiver.

This Valentin had to fasten the clumsily-stuffed figure upon the back of the wild mare, and it was really a beautiful spectacle to see the cunning Indian overcome the kicking and rearing animal. He had not touched a drop of liquor that whole day, and acquitted himself exceedingly well; but when I passed the hotel that evening, the fine and nobly-formed Indian, whom I had admired in his wild beauty during the day, was lying dead drunk under an old ox-cart upon his back, his feet stemmed against the axletree, and his head resting upon an old yoke which had been thrown under there. At his left side an empty brandy-bottle showed what he had done, and in his right hand he held another, still half full.

"Dice que me quieres,"

he sung, or rather stammered, with heavy tongue, and tried to throw a glance on the bottle—the foam was upon his lips.

"Dice que me quieres, Caramba,
Can el corazon—
Dice que—huzza cavallita!"

he suddenly burst out, dreaming himself still on his wild chase after the poor beast of a mare, which they had driven with the mad figure of Judas

Iscariot dangling to its back, into the mountains. "Huzza! huzza! guardase, huzza!" and the wild exclamations, breaking off into an inarticulated, unearthly scream, were followed by a perfect flood of angry words in the Indian tongue. He wanted to lift, after this, the bottle once more to his mouth, but he was not able to drink, and while the sharp brandy ran over his neck and face, he shut his glassy eyes, and soon lay motionless and senseless in deep sleep.

Spirituous liquors have killed more men than powder and lead ever did!

But Valentin was not the only character worth mentioning in the Mission, though he was the only Indian really respected by the whites—as long as he kept sober, of course.

Amongst the whites, every part of the world seemed to have sent to California some odd specimen of its curiosities in mankind, and I found a number of them principally among my own countrymen. The most of these, however, had come with the first volunteers, and even before gold had been discovered in California, from the States—Uncle Sam having sent them out rather on speculation. These volunteers—and, rather singularly, the greater part of them Germans, were but adventurers, who had nothing to lose in the world but their lives, and they knew exactly the value

of them. The United States must have regarded them as lost at that time, for it is impossible they could think a handful of such "food for powder" would be able to conquer a whole, and even very extensive state; but if the Spaniards killed them, government had then a just excuse to avenge its citizens. Those few mad-caps, however, cut off from all succour, and finding themselves rather in a scrape, aided at the same time by the fearless heart of the adventurous and daring Fremont, with a troop of trappers and hunters, really took possession of the forts, and kept them till the States first, and afterwards the citizens of the whole world, sent over their masses of people to hold the country against everything California itself or Mexico could afterwards effect.

Of these volunteers, when the gold had been once discovered, crowds deserted, leaving the officers to follow them, and the forts to themselves. Most of them also discovered the richest mines; thus, for instance, Sullivan's Creek, one of the richest places in the whole region, was discovered by some of Sullivan's dragoons; the Mormon Gulch, Carson's Creek, the Rich Gulch, and many more, by others. But these men seemed to have thought—and, in fact, they affirmed it themselves—that these rich placers would never be exhausted. As soon as they gained money then, and sometimes five, six, or more ounces in

a day, they threw it away again in champagne and other luxuries, which they had formerly never thought of, expecting the next day to furnish new gold. Thus they lived in a perfect trance—a kind of intoxication of golden dreams—till more and more gold-diggers flocked in, and filled the gulches and ravines, and as they occupied those places where there was the least sign of gold, the precious metal became scarcer every day; and these old diggers, not willing to acknowledge such a fact, now crossed over from one river to another, commencing here and there to search for such spots as they had found before, and giving it up as soon as the place would not pay, till they themselves could not pay anything more, and found themselves at last obliged to work with the rest for whatever they could get, when they had to be satisfied with two and three dollars a-day, though they had formerly spurned a place that had not yielded them as many ounces.

Plenty of these men were now in San Francisco, and also at the Mission Dolores, working for what they could get, merely to gain their living during the rainy season.

But some interesting settlers of former times also lived in the neighbourhood, amongst them especially an old German, who had come to California twenty or twenty-five years before, and served in the late American war—and though he did not

like to acknowledge it himself, it was generally known—as a spy to the Americans, and, I really believe, to the Californians at the same time. He was hand and glove with the old priest at least, as long as he lived in the Mission, always gliding about with a dark coat and darker face, broad-brimmed hat, and squinting eyes, never talking much about the past, and only thawing, as it were, after half a bottle of brandy, the enjoyment of which he could not withstand. Many a word then escaped his lips which he would never have suffered to pass in a state of consciousness, words that told of dark deeds and actions; and after such a spree, as if afraid to trust himself any longer among his ellow-men, he always disappeared for several days, and on returning he was the same sly old fox again, gliding about and watching with careful eye what passed around him.

Runaway seamen, principally from whalers, abounded, also deserters from the Mexican war; and I am sure there never was and never will be such a country and such a time again, where all stages of society and such a variety of characters will be mixed up in a similar way, as at that time in California. Let there be ever so much gold discovered in other parts of the world, all these characters could only be collected once in one single spot; and though a good many of them will

emigrate, they will never find themselves together again.

Among the festivities of these days there was a marriage between an American and a Californian lady, but this union was talked about a good deal, the old Californians being angry enough about it. They do not like their conquerors, and, seeing every day new masses of them flocking in, the feeling that it would be perfect madness only to think about trying to regain their lost country, seems to make them only hate them the more. Even during my residence at the Mission, several murders were committed on the short road between that place and San Francisco, or Yerba Buena (Peppermint) as the old Californians call the place. The murdered men were all Americans, and two of the bodies were found with innumerable wounds all over them, the murderer seeming to have satiated his bloody thirst for revenge by running his knife again and again in the already lifeless corpse.

The American and the young Californian lady were married in the true native, but rather singular style, the priest coupling the pair in good earnest by tying them together hard and fast with a silken rope, when they knelt before the altar, and covering them with a large cloth, left them under it till the whole ceremony was over.

The American had of course to become a Roman Catholic, but no matter—he got his wife;

but another American fared far worse in that respect in Valparaiso, where he also courted a Chilean lady, and was told by his beloved and her priest that she would marry him if he became a Roman Catholic. He agreed to that, and going through all the necessary ceremonies, even holding out a probation time, I do not know how long, thought himself after this a most excellent Catholic, and wanted his wife; but he had not finished yet. The priest told him that though he had renounced his old errors, there was too much of the old leaven left in him yet for him to take a Christian wife till that was expelled; so, to make sure of it, he would have to kneel and pray five days more in some old cloister in the neighbourhood, and be considered afterwards a pure and true Christian. And at it he went; only five days more, and the ceremonies had already lasted more than fifteen, so he did everything that was required and asked of him, repented every sin he had committed before, promised to become a new man, and left the cloister, where he had fasted and prayed for five days, as hungry and as good a Christian as ever existed, to find—the young lady for whom he had undergone all these privations married to another in the meantime. She had only practised a pious fraud—won him to save his soul, that was all; and he could not even complain to anybody about it, for fear of being laughed at.

We had, down to the last days of February, and even the first of March, showers of rain regularly every day, sometimes even perfect falls of rain that lasted a whole week and longer, but the weather seemed to clear up a little more now, the sun gaining more power every day. The hills were clothed in a lively green, even the last snow had melted from the opposite coast, and spring, beautiful spring, exhaled its genial breath from southern climes. But as life and growth quickened, and fermented in the veins of the plants and in the arteries of nature itself, as the buds swelled, and sweet little spring flowers peered out from the still cold ground to look how the world fared this year, so in man—in those thousands who were driven during the rainy season into the shelter of the warmer towns—a new spirit seemed to rise and grow. Three days' sunshine, and men who accepted only a few days before the lowest wages, merely to live, refused splendid offers, sold or threw away what they had saved up to this minute from the wreck of their former property, and prepared for a start into the mines, acting, frequently as if their life all at once depended on an hour's longer stay in town. Tents, which they themselves had sold at the last fall in the mountains for ten and twelve dollars, only to get rid of them, they bought again for fifty and sixty, to pack them up once more. Tin pans, blankets, and provisions

rose in price; and mules nobody hardly would have during the winter, became the most favourite and sought-for articles.

And to which mines do these thousands flock, who are ready for a start while the ground is not yet dry from the last rains, and another spell of wet weather—as really happened—might set in every hour? The richest, of course, ought to attract the most gold-finders to their gulches—but which of them are the richest? Nobody can tell, for if you believe the accounts you read in the papers, there is not a spot in the whole mountains where, on striking your pick down, you can fail hitting on a lump. One day a report comes down from the Yuba of the gold-diggers earning there on an average one or two ounces daily. The next story is from the Stanislaus, of some one having lit on a lump of I do not know how many pounds troy weight; next they tell of new mines discovered in the coast range, and soon afterwards mysterious accounts are current of a gold lake having been discovered by some hunters in the northern diggings.

To make things worse, the first accounts of Trinidad Bay arrived just at this time.

"Several degrees farther north a new bay, called the Trinidad, has been discovered, and several men, who landed there from a schooner, washed out thousands of dollars in a few hours." This notice in one of the San Francisco papers played the mis-

chief with many a poor fellow, who really could not lose such an opportunity of becoming a rich man, merely by going a few miles out to sea again. If you found, from that time, three men together in the street, you could make any bet you liked that one of them was bound for Trinidad, and the singular fact appeared that people went through the Golden Gate again to search for gold.

Trinidad Bay really existed, and several schooners went there to take goods and provisions to the gold country—to wish afterwards they had stayed where they were. I pity poor gold-diggers who follow the advice of the papers; they are most certain to go to the wrong place; and all those who have been once in the mines, and become acquainted with life and habits there, soon learn what to think of such advertisements. Where gold-diggers anywhere in the mountains are "making good out," as the saying is, you may depend upon it they do not talk, much less write about it. They stick to the place, working away as quietly as they can, and never pretending to earn much more than their living; but, on the contrary, where the mines give out, or nothing new and good has been lately discovered, and the storekeepers have a quantity of provisions and other goods they do not know how to sell, there are always men at leisure to write long and glowing accounts of "newly-discovered riches;" and if

they only draw a couple of hundred diggers to the place—these must live at least while they stay up there—provisions will be sold, and after a while, in company with these men whom they had enticed up here, they can leave these "exceedingly rich places," and hunt for another spot.

But whatever disadvantages such a cheating system has for individuals who suffer under it, it is very necessary for the whole welfare of the country. If those places were really known and faithfully advertised where the most gold is to be found, all the thousands who now follow rather a wild goose chase over the different mountains and water-courses, would all flock to these few places, and bloodshed and murder would be the unavoidable consequence.

The population increased in a nearly incredible way. From the States alone during the last three months, one hundred and fifty vessels had started: ten, twelve, and fifteen, sometimes twenty or twenty-five, arrived every day. A monster train was expected over the Rocky Mountains; and from the north and south the neighbours also flocked in to the golden harvest. In the interior itself there seemed to be just at this time a great many difficulties—Americans and foreigners had not unfrequently some slight, but even bloody quarrels with one another. Legally, foreigners could not be driven out of the mines;

but what could the law do by itself, where there was nobody to uphold it? A crowd of rowdies might do anything they pleased, and it pleased them to do almost anything. Such difficulties gained, at the same time, a more serious complexion by a bill, brought before the legislature by one of those thoughtless, miserable beings, who care not for the world if they can only flatter their own self-love for a quarter of an hour. This bill consisted of nothing less than really prohibiting foreigners from working in the mines; and though it could never be put in force—for the proclamation of it would have been the signal for a regular war through every part of the mines—the mere rumour of it passed with lightning speed through all the valleys, and caused quarrels and bloodshed.

On my frequent visits to town—for I took the beer regularly over with the younger Witzleben in the boat—it was really astonishing to notice the improvements each single week could show, partly in the erection of houses, partly in the improvement of the streets. The side-walks of staves grew, as it seemed, over night, and in some streets already ran along whole rows of houses; and whenever we came in with our boat we had to look for another landing-place, for nearly each time they had built a house just in our way, or commenced erecting a wharf, by driving posts in the ground, as if to spite us. The streets themselves,

though, were as bad as ever, or worse; for who could tell their actual state, when many a place existed where they had not even been sounded as yet?

As many an old settler had prophesied, the few fine days we had in March were soon followed again by perfect floods of rain; the Sacramento even rose to a greater height than any white man had yet witnessed, swamping at the same time the whole town, sweeping houses and tents, goods and stores, and in fact everything away before it, clearing the woods of all the cut cord-wood, carrying on its grim sport with haystacks and fences, and dividing the much-disputed soil into an even allowance of water lots. The loss of property was said to be immense, and many people perished in the raging flood.

But such changes are of too frequent occurrence in California to be talked of much after they have passed; so what water did for Sacramento city, fire had done for San Francisco (just on Christmas Eve) some time before. In a few hours a large space of ground was covered with smoking ashes, and two days later the stranger might look in vain for the empty and blackened space which in the old country would be undisturbed sometimes for weeks after a large fire, if only to let the ground get cold again. In three or four days some of the smaller buildings were run up again

and inhabited; the Parker House, one of the largest buildings in town, which had cost about thirty thousand dollars to erect, and which brought in twelve thousand dollars rent every month—of course, mostly by innumerable gambling-tables in the large saloons—was again raised, five days afterwards, and a bargain had been made with the architect to have it ready for habitation in sixteen days.

But if the town needed enormous sums for its improvement, it also had an enormous income, and the custom-house in particular drew extraordinary quantities of money. The officers there were, in fact, not able any longer to count the silver, so they measured it first, and afterwards—as even that could not be done quickly enough—they weighed the silver in large scales, using shovels to fill them. And in spite of this there was a great deal of smuggling going on from nearly all the ships in the harbour. When once taken from the vessel, nobody asked any farther about it, even if you landed fifty boat-loads on any wharf you pleased. Officers are put on board to see the freight discharged, and nothing is easier than to unload whatever you want during night; or, if skippers do not like to run any risk at all, to pay these custom-house officers, who have a very small salary, a certain sum, and then do nearly anything they please. But they must not be too careless,

notwithstanding, as only lately three ships were confiscated, whose masters had calculated rather too confidently upon the negligence of the custom-house officers.

Confiscated goods are always sold by public auction; but the custom-house alone does not bring them, but also the street commissioners, who from time to time hold regular auctions of similar stores which they take away in the streets. It was their business to see the streets cleared of the quantities of goods, which merchants not unfrequently left at that time before their houses, because they could not get them in. The commissioners gave the owners of goods, in such a case, a certain time to take their goods away; and if the latter did not do it, the former did. They also often found goods nobody claimed, the costs of transport or storage amounting to more than the goods were worth. All these were sold, and the proceeds used for street improvements in town.

Houses and lumber arrived in immense quantities; ready-made buildings were imported, principally from China, and with Chinamen in the bargain. Wherever you saw in the streets a man on the top of a little frame-house, nailing up the shingles, or doing something else to it, you could bet ten to one it was a Chinese. Large sums were lost, though, in the timber and lumber trade; and whole cargoes sold by auction only to cover the

freight, did not even fetch half that sometimes, the transport being so very high from the ship to the town. A rise in the price of lumber was expected with the next large fire, of which people spoke, as if it was a thing which must regularly return, like summer and winter. Provisions rose and fell, just as vessels came in, or were expected; buying and selling was as good as playing at hazard, or putting one's money upon a monte-table. The worth of money, therefore, was also extraordinary. Years were pressed into months, and interest was calculated in the same manner; six per cent. per month was the common interest for money, but ten, twelve, and even more, was frequently given.

With regard to literary productions there had been very little done in San Francisco as yet; literature was a matter of money like everything else. But there already existed three papers in the city, the "Alta California," the "Pacific News," and a "Commercial Bulletin."

Speaking of literature, I may just as well mention a book here, which appeared in England, and was translated nearly into every other language, as it was the first of the kind: "Four Months among the Gold-finders in California," I believe was the title, written by Mr. Tyrwitt Brooks. I had translated it myself into German, and showed a copy of it afterwards in San Francisco to Captain

Sutter; but though Mr. Brooks related how kindly he had been received by Captain Sutter, and gave at the same time a rather glowing description of this gentleman's lovely daughter, Captain Sutter knew nothing about him, and another thing, his family was at that time in Switzerland, and only came to California in 1850. Mr. Brooks also introduces a dreadful tale of a sailor-boy whom the Indians scalped, and though it is very well related, I am bound to say the Indians in California do not scalp at all.

But enough of town life at present, I must return here in any case, before I leave California again; and the reader may throw his blanket upon his back, if he has a mind to see the mines, and take a trip with me to the mountains.

CHAPTER V.

THE MINES, AND THE PEOPLE IN THEM.

On a beautiful spring morning, I started with a former fellow-passenger by the 'Talisman,' a man of the name of Henry Boehm, this time for the southern mines, and not on board a schooner, but in a small steamer, our destination being Stockton, on the San Joaquin.

The change was nearly incredible, which a few months had wrought in this bay: three summers before hardly a small sail disturbed the solitude of the quiet sheet of water, now hundreds of anchors found its bottom, and innumerable sailing craft and steamers darted through the ploughed-up tide; on its shores towns sprang up nearly in one night, and steam-engines worked noisily on the same spot where, hardly a year ago, the Indian followed with careful steps the tracks of the grizzly bear and elk. But California has also everything that is requisite to work such a wonderful change; time has been annihilated,

workmen are there as many as the country requires, and money is furnished by the very men who help to establish the State. Still this country is in an unnatural condition: there is an uninterrupted yearning for money—money only; and those who only live for this will probably feel comfortable, but those who have the least interest in anything of a higher tendency will never make this country their home, or, if they do, become like the rest, machines to coin money out of everything that comes under their hand, from preaching down to stealing, and give up any other thoughts.

The boat was a slow one, and it took us exactly twenty-four hours to reach the little tent town, where my companion, who had some goods with him, engaged an ox cart at nine cents the pound, to Murphy's New Diggings, a distance of from eighty to eighty-five miles. Freight was cheap now, for in winter-time they had paid for the same distance sixty, eighty, ninety cents, and even a dollar per pound. There were carts and mule-droves enough now to profit by the good state of the roads. The Mexicans especially, display a great dexterity in packing mules with everything that is intrusted to them, and they know not only how to arrange to best advantage flour-bags and small barrels upon the mules, but even fasten on the pack-saddle large square boxes, and single meat-barrels of about three hundred pounds apiece, without

hurting the backs of their mules, and are very seldom even compelled to tie it more firmly.

Stockton was a small place, not half as large as Sacramento, though with a position equally as good as that town, and is certainly destined to be in future years the third city of the Californian republic.

An old gentleman from the States, a Mr. Hillman, as he called himself, had his freight and baggage on the same waggon with us; and in his company were two young Americans whom he had engaged, as we afterwards understood, to help him to work a quick-silver machine, and an Irish servant, Jeremiah Livingston, commonly called for shortness, Jerry, who seemed to be engaged for any service in general, and the quicksilver-machine in particular. We all footed it, except Mr. Hillman, who had bought a mule for himself in Stockton, and rode it, with an open umbrella to keep the sun off, only changing now and then with Jerry, to stretch his legs, as he called it.

Boehm and I had chosen on the first night a bushy tree, to camp under; but Mr. Hillman, who carried a tent with him, in his kind-heartedness, would not allow us to sleep out in the open air, while he had a shelter above him, and room enough for several more; so we had to go in, though, for my own part, I would ten times sooner have preferred the fresh mountain-air. But Mr.

Hillman would not hear of it; and I soon found he did not intend to give us only the benefit of his canvas, but also that of his prayers. Mr. Hillman was a character, as I soon found out.

When we had laid ourselves down, and while the candle was yet burning, which Jerry had stuck with some pointed instrument into the centre post of the tent, Mr. Hillman, who was a Methodist, suddenly sat up in his bed, and taking his nightcap off, commenced with close-shut eyes and much gesticulation, while the dim flare of the candle threw a ghastly light upon his sharply-cut features, a long, loud prayer. Mr. Livingston, at the same time, a Roman Catholic, but far too good a miller not to set his sweeps with the wind wherever it blew from, also rose up on his knees and elbows, and resting his head on his two closed fists, lay there, only changing the greater part of the weight sometimes from his right side to his left, and back again, and patiently awaited the end of the prayer; but simultaneously with the Amen (of which a kind of instinct or long practice seemed to give him warning) he rolled over on one of his sides, commonly the off-side, and without even stretching himself, went asleep just exactly in the position he had knelt in. One of the young men had to get up and blow out the light.

Our road at first lay through a rather monotonous plain, overgrown with scattered oaks. These

oaks bear a very long and sweet acorn, much resembling a nut in taste, and forming, in fact, the main winter nourishment of numerous tribes of Indians.

On the 12th of April we reached a little river, the Calaveres, where we had to unpack all our load, and take the waggon to pieces to cross over in a small boat. We were approaching the chain of mountains, which stretched out ahead of us in a blue ridge, about four o'clock in the afternoon, having everything ready again for a new start, and now entering a more hilly and wooded country, the landscape acquired a varied and pleasing character—a wide undulating stretch of prairie-like country, with little thickets scattered over it, the background formed by high and darkly-wooded mountain-ridges. Nature seemed to have decked herself to-day with her most beautiful charms and riches. It was as if we had entered the kingdom of flowers, the ground, as far as eye could reach, being one vast carpet of the most beautiful colours heart could wish to see, sweet odours being wafted at the same time by the light breeze over the gently-heaving ocean of many-hued waves. Never in my life had I seen anything like it; and none of us witnessed this wonderful spectacle untouched, and more than once the thoughts gained words. Oh! what would we not give could we send a bouquet of these beautiful flowers home!

Even old Mr. Hillman, who had appeared in a new character at the ferry, seemed moved, but in his own way, for he stopped several times (Jerry now being upon the mule to bring up the rear), looked at the sweet sight with folded hands, and admiringly said:

"What a glorious country! What flowers! Good Heavens! if I had that garden within three miles of New York, I'd make my twenty dollars every day out of it!"

But I must first mention the new character he had appeared in. While his men were busily employed with the freight, and a good many other waggoners and passengers for the mines were standing before the grog-shop which an American kept here, he suddenly appeared in the crowd with Jerry, carrying a whole armful of razor-strops, and began praising them with such extraordinary volubility, that the by-standers really forgot strops and everything else in listening to the funny old razor-strop man, as he called himself, and I understood, at the same time, that he was known under that name in all the eastern states of North America.

He then asked somebody for a pocket-knife, and knocking it in the most heedless way, and much to the discomfiture of the unhappy owner, with its edge against the iron of the nearest waggon-wheels, and some stones at his feet, and

after sticking it in the ground, and hammering away with it, he whettled it awhile upon his patent strop, telling the multitude that pressed round him meanwhile a whole lot of funny stories and anecdotes. Then suddenly catching somebody, without farther warning, by the hand, he rolled or stripped his sleeve up, till a part of the arm became visible, and spitting upon it, while the by-standers gave a loud cheer, and holding hard—for the man tried to pull his hand away from him, for he did not know what was coming next—shaved the hairs off his arm with the stropped pocket-knife.

Such a character was the razor-strop man; and Jerry stood by, holding the strops in one hand and the open umbrella in the other, to keep the sun off, and not moving a muscle of his face at the old fellow's funny tales, and the roaring laughter of the by-standers. He had heard the same stories, I have no doubt, many a time.

On Saturday, the 18th, we passed nearly the whole day through an uninterrupted flower-garden; the country became more hilly, and shady groves, with clear and murmuring streams, were intersected by long open stretches, covered with the most brilliant flowers imaginable, and even forming perfect drawings on the plain by the different kinds that grew together. Thus, principally under

single trees, a blue-bell had occupied the shady places, the deep-running little water-courses were marked on both sides by a broad lilac stripe of sweet-scented star-blossoms, and red and yellow varied in the picture almost regularly with the swelling or sinking of the soil.

This evening the old razor-strop man asked Heaven, in his common loud evening prayer, to have the goodness not to be angry with him if he —the razor-strop man—on the next day, on a Sabbath, not merely travelled on the road, but also had his mind occupied with worldly thoughts—gold and other trash—while he knew very well it was his solemn duty to pray only, and think of his sins.

Next day (Sunday), we reached the first diggings, and tried the pans after dinner, at a place formerly worked. There was gold there, and enough of it to make old Mr. Hillman think earnestly of stopping here with his machine—who knows if it would not have been the best for him?—but his young men did not seem to like the place, and persuaded him to go on. And so he did afterwards, but that night, in the tent, we had to hear a long and powerful sermon. "As he had predicted yesterday," he said in it, "so it had happened. Instead of thinking of Heaven and his own miserable sins, he had thrown his worldly thoughts entirely, during the whole blessed

Sabbath upon the mean stuff—the gold, and how to get together in the shortest possible time the largest possible quantity; but he only rejoiced (as he continued, lifting up his face, though without opening his eyes) that he knew his own weakness so well as to have foreseen this very accident. There was some hope in that for him, that he would throw off his sins some day, and become a new man."

On Monday night—and I had left the waggons to take a hunt through the woods—we reached Angelo Camp, a distance of about nine miles from the place we wanted to go to, finding it a large mining place. Here Mr. Hillman had made up his mind to stop—several other quick-silver-machines were at work here also — and he intended to try his fortune. But his prayer this night struck home—there was no asking for any blessedness in general. No; he went straight to the point, and reminded his Creator how he Mr. Hillman had promised him, before he started from New York, a new house of worship in his own little place when he safely returned to the States; and he now asked Him to let him also find gold enough in the diggings to pay for it.

Next morning, we reached Murphy's New—or, as they were sometimes called, the Rich Diggings—an appellation, however, the storekeepers gave

them, to attract new-comers to their place. But Murphy's Diggings were a real little mining town, and I had not seen one so complete in every respect. The place itself—or the town, I may well call it, for they had elected an alcalde, sheriff, and constable, and had given the little place the name of Stoutenburgh—consisted of one regularly-built and main street—tents, of course—with only one frame shed (and how respectable it looked amongst its cotton comrades!) between them; but every tent a grog-shop, and in some of them gambling-tables as well. Behind this street, and farther on in the flat, other tents were wildly scattered about, just as they had found the shade of a tree or a cluster of little bushes to shelter them against the wind, and in these the miners lived.

The landscape was beautiful; and the little place, surrounded by high, wooded hills, with the American stars and stripes waving over it, was as romantically situated, in the wide valley, as heart could wish. The richest spot in this mining district was said to be the "flat," an open piece of ground, which the little creek, a tributary of the Stanislaus, seemed to have swept over in former times of flood. Mexicans had discovered the place, and it was said that they had dug very deep holes here, and taken out a large quantity of gold. The news spread, and from all sides traders, with

worked everywhere, well satisfied if they could find on an average from three to five dollars' worth a day. Some made more, of course, but hundreds were, at the same time, working merely for their living, and some even accepted work with pleasure at two dollars a day, if they could only get it.

So much for all the mining accounts. I will not deny that many have made their fortune up in the mountains by digging, and many are making it still, but it is a game of lottery, with this disadvantage, that if you put your money into a lottery, you can bide your time at your ease and leisure till your blank comes out, while you have to work it out here yourselves with pick-axe and spade.

But in spite of this, all these countries are quite another thing for the working classes. A common labourer, if he can by any possibility pay his passage, should go there by all means. He will earn his living without any doubt, and a better living than he had at home, and may strike a good place once in a while; but all those who are not used to very hard labour, and who, cannot do without the comforts they thought in former times indispensable, had better stay at home and stick to their occupations, or they will rue the day when they threw down their pen, or whatever they wielded, to take hold of such a disagreeable instrument as a pick-axe is, especially

in wet weather—the water running down your sleeves, and making you feel uncomfortable up to your elbows.

I lived a miner's life—without reckoning our first unhappy trip in the rainy season—for many months, going through all gradations, and working in every way; and the reader may think I became acquainted with it; but I should not speak the truth if I were to say I ever liked it. There were pleasant moments in it; the free wild life in the mountains, especially in fair weather, has a great attraction, and looks even fairer on the paper than it is in reality; and stout and healthy as I was I soon became used to the hard work. But the good side of the whole proved in the long run only to be moments, and the long long days and months that intervened could not compensate for all I had left, for all I had to undergo. And yet I was better off than all the rest of the miners; I had not come here to get gold, but to see and learn the life in California, to mingle with the different characters, and store them up till the time came—a time when I could take them out again, and set them up once more as living things; and this gold I found wherever I looked, for such a purpose no place could have been better chosen than California; so I never regretted the time I passed there. But I had spent the money with which I had intended to leave California, after I

had seen enough of it, in my unexpected jaunt through the Pampas and across the Cordilleras; and I had now to work out with the rest, at least enough to take me away again, through the South Sea Islands to Sydney, where I had money waiting.

But to return to our life in the mountains. Boehm had set up a small store, and as he had been up here before, he proposed to me to work together. I had not the least objection, for being a raw hand at it yet, I had to learn nearly everything. My partner commenced working with me, but soon gave up again, and spent in his store the greatest part of the time, while I had to divide with him what I washed out. When I told him at last this would never do, he persuaded me again—and he had some other reasons for it, as I found afterwards—to become a partner in his store, and share everything with him.

It served me exactly right. I had warned others so frequently, by my long experience in the United States, not to enter into such partnerships, if they could possibly avoid it, and now I jumped head over heels into one myself, and I was to suffer for it.

Boehm was ill for a good while, and as he had nearly sold out those few things he had brought up with him, one of us had to go down to San Francisco again to fetch more—the greatest part on credit, of course. He could not go in the state he

[illegible] on the 29th of [illegible] without further accident, except running the danger of being lassoed one [illegible] by the two mules which two Canadians were driving, one morning behind us, and to their delight I do not cannot believe. It was [illegible], however, and I cocked my rifle with the [illegible] was in danger the cowardly rascals [illegible] to attack me openly.

That day I made the longest march in twenty-four hours that I had ever done, walking from day-break to [illegible], and [illegible] in the evening I [illegible] till the moon got up, fifty-three miles.

[illegible] passed the Dalles that evening. I met a couple of waggons with a party going up to the mines—a thing of so common occurrence, that I never thought of looking at the men, and only observed a young Frenchman, who had walked up to a tree which had been festooned with her boots by a bear, and was treating her, as he stood right before her, to "Allons enfants de la patrie" upon the trumpet, while the astonished animal with her head pulled back as far as ever she could. Having my face turned towards this rather singular group, I was going to pass the waggons, when I heard a voice say:

"I must have seen that face before—hem!"

I turned quickly, and had to laugh right out, for

in the tired, wayworn, dust-covered, and sunburnt figure before me, I recognised nobody else than my old landlord in Buenos Ayres—that merry, wool-trading and trying Englishman, Mr. Davies, who had treated me at that time to such dreadful stories about California, warning, even begging me not to run head-foremost into perdition, by going to such an awful country. And now he was here himself; and after a very dangerous trip round the Cape, as he told me in a few words, toiling in the sweat of his brow, to undergo all those dreadful things he had warned me against. Was it not by the interposition of fate that I caught him in the act? In fact he did not seem to like it much; but the short time allowed us—for his waggons had gone on in the meantime, and I had also a long day's march before me—I profited by, to give him, in as few words as possible—a just punishment for his own neglected prophecies—the most horrible description of the mines I could imagine; and I was a sort of authority at present, as I was just returning from them. His face became longer and longer, and when I saw him in a kind of petrified despair, I shook hands with him, bade him a hearty farewell, and walked on.

At daybreak next morning I shot a very large brown wolf—a much larger species than I had ever found in the States; I was just resting a little on

an old log, when he came through the plain, and stopping right in the road—only a little distance off—looked at me. I could do nothing with it though, for I wanted to reach Stockton, for fear of missing the steamer for San Francisco; but there was no necessity for my hurrying, and I could have taken the walk more at my leisure. No steamer started that day, and all I could do was to walk about through the town, to see what little I could there.

There was a great deal of business transacted in Stockton at this time: boats arrived every day, bringing goods and provisions for the mines; and round the little town, it really looked like a Mexican camp, for everywhere the night-fires blazed, and every spot of good grass was occupied by mule-droves, just come in from, or ready to start for, the mines again.

I amused myself by visiting the different gambling-houses this day. Many of them were quite new, some hardly furnished with everything necessary, to be paid for afterwards by the hard-earned money of some foolish diggers; but nearly all of them had pictures in them to attract the notice of the passers-by; and those who had been able to buy it, had most certainly, at least, one larger painting in oil, representing a female figure with as little clothing as possible. You could find the same at San Francisco in every

gambling hell, and the farther you went in the interior, the more indecent these pictures became, becoming still worse in the mines; while even the largest hotel and gambling-house in Stockton, the 'El Dorado,' with the finest saloon in town, and just opposite the landing, in the most frequented part of the place, had the most indelicate kind of oil-painting right over the bar. There was, it is true, no danger of ladies frequenting, or even entering such a low place, but every decent man would also turn away in disgust from such a sight. Those gambling-houses are now to California what slave-holding is to the United States.

One of them I visited, seemed to have been opened only a few days before; there was a perfectly new floor in it, and the naked walls were covered with a light blue-flowered calico. In the middle of the comfortless room, a table, covered with a piece of green cloth, displayed a very small pile of silver-dollars, and two men sitting opposite each other were shuffling cards for want of a better occupation. All those arts to entice greenhorns to enter were wanting yet, if I did not count a little negro boy among them, who was squatting in a corner, pulling away at an old screechy accordion, to make at least some kind of noise. But it was impossible for the room to be without some ornaments on the wall, and the owner, in very

good taste, had bought just half-a-dozen coloured prints, all of them representing one and the same young lady, with very square shoulders and a very green frock, an extremely high head-dress and wide balloon-like sleeves, who had turned her body to the right, and her face in such a determined way over the left shoulder, that it really looked as if she wore her face upon her back. These six copies of exactly the same print over the whole room, made an extraordinary impression upon the beholder.

That night I slept in the Stockton restaurant, that is, not in a bed—for they had neither beds, nor room for them—but somewhere in the dining-saloon, which was at the same time bar and parlour. I had laid my blanket, gun, and knife upon one of the small tables, while we were at supper in another corner of the room; talking and laughing afterwards till late in the evening with a party of new-comers, who wanted to give the mines a trial. And when I went to look out for a resting-place, and was going to see to my gun, and give that a safe corner during the night, one of the owners of the house, an Alsacian, stepped up to me, and said very politely:

"Oh, would you be so kind and take those things down; this gentleman sleeps on that table."

I looked rather astonished round at the gentle-

man, and found he did not sleep on the table, but really already stood before me. He was a tall, raw-boned, broad-shouldered man in a blue blanket-coat, in spite of the warm weather, another blanket under one arm, and his pulled-off boots under the other, standing there with closed eyes, and seemingly quite irresolute whether he should wait till the bed was made, or rather tumble over there where he stood, to have his nap out. The landlord though, on seeing me look so long at the rum customer, and thinking perhaps I wanted the table for my own bed, remarked, as if excusing the blue blanket-coat: "The gentleman has already slept seven nights on that same table." I took, of course, everything down directly. He had most certainly a right of pre-emption; but he must have looked at me through his eyelids, for he never opened his eyes a single moment; and I had hardly taken the last thing off, when he lay stretched out at full length upon the boards, snoring away as hard as he could. I myself slept, *par terre*, with him.

Next night I was in San Francisco, and stopped at a fellow-passenger's house, as I only intended to stay two or three days in town.

The second morning I was awakened by a wild and singular noise. Starting up in bed, I stared round me, astonished at seeing the room lit up so brilliantly. I was half-dreaming then, but

soon came to my senses again; and jumping out of bed, dressed myself as quickly as possible.

Fire! fire in San Francisco! In two minutes I was down in the street, and on the Plaza, and could see here only too well with what dreadful power the fiery element grew and raged! It had commenced in one of the gambling-houses, and spreading to the right and left, the flame ran along the tents and dry wooden roofs as if they had been pitched and tarred expressly for the purpose. With really incredible speed the flame caught whole rows of buildings, leaping even across the streets, and spreading fear and terror around. I had begun to help in saving the goods in some houses, and carried them across the streets to some safer place; but it was hardly possible to save much, for when we commenced clearing a place, the flame surrounded and destroyed it in the next five minutes. Finally, in Dupont Street as the last point, we stopped the progress of the fire by tearing down some light wooden buildings; and at eleven o'clock all danger for the rest of the town was past.

During the night, the fire broke out again in several places, but only amongst the half-burnt stumps of some house-posts, and without threatening any other part. But on that same afternoon, and not four hours after the fire, while the workmen

were even obliged to throw buckets of water upon the hissing ground, to quench the burning ashes, in the midst of smoke and destruction, beams and lumber were carried into the very centre of the burnt-down space, carpenters commenced hammering and sawing, and next morning a new gambling-hell, of light frame-work, stretched over with canvas, was again erected, with a laid floor, and bar, and hazard-tables, and the violins and trumpets were playing lustily away over the ruin of thousands.

I should really have felt thankful if a thunderbolt had again demolished the hut over those miserable gamblers' heads, who set up their hellish games again, as if in derision of every feeling of humanity.

Three days afterwards I returned to the mines, all my business being transacted, and only being delayed a couple of days by the effects of the fire. I reached Stockton, engaged a team—and freight had fallen by this time to seven cents—and travelled on, not stopping longer than one night at Stockton.

The roads were now excellent, but extremely dusty; and on approaching the Calaveres again, I saw several empty ox-carts coming down towards us, enveloped in a cloud of dust, with the objects in it hardly discernible. When I was right opposite to them, I could see they were some travellers

returning from the mines upon the first waggon—a very common way to leave the diggings if the parties have no money to buy a mule, or are too lazy or old to walk.

"Hallo, Sir!" said a voice, and stopping rather astonished at the sound in the road, I recognised in the two persons who were really coated with a thick crust of dust, my former fellow-travellers, Mr. Hillman, the razor-strop man, and Jeremiah Livingston, his faithful Sancho. Mr. Hillman looked pale, at least downcast, for his complexion was entirely hidden. Jerry, however, on the contrary, was the very picture of happiness—the hard mining work lay behind him, and he was going back, as he said, among Christians.

Poor Hillman! your rosy plans had not been realized then; on the contrary, you had sold every thing, mule and quicksilver-machine, tent and provisions; all that was left of your possessions, as far as I could see at least, being Jerry Livingston and the brown umbrella. The Lord then had not given the gold for his new house of worship. But I have reason to doubt whether Mr. Hillman will think himself now bound by his promise—given in former times, most certainly only under the condition of safe return and health.

The waggon stopped while I talked to them, but the old razor-strop man had lost all his happiness; his dreams had faded away, and he had

not yet had time to form new ones. He was sitting comparatively in a blank at present. People are not apt to be merry at such times.

That day I left the waggons to take a good hunt through the woods, but I could not come in rifle-shot of anything till next morning, when I shot a deer, but had also to leave it, as, although mortally wounded, it ran, or rather tumbled down one of the steep and lofty mountain-slopes. It would have taken half-a-day to follow it and bring a part of the meat up. But I met another hunter, and setting him on the track, had the satisfaction of hearing afterwards that he had found the dead buck.

To say a few words about hunting in California—many a man would be very much disappointed if he believed all the stories they tell him about it in San Francisco, and then start, with such ideas, to the mines. There are places still left where there is a good deal of game, but if you go there you will find out the reason why; for it is a wilderness of swamps and tulas, the Californian rushes, in which nothing could exist except the wild beasts of the forest. In those swamps which lie between Sacramento and the Bay hills, or even between Stockton and Pueblo San Jose, you find even yet, and among a rapidly increasing population, the old grizzly bear, the elk, and the Virginian deer, but there are also other places, where there is no gold, man has had as yet no further

inducement to go there but to hunt; and though they pay an excellent price for game in San Francisco, gold-digging has been thought till now still more profitable, and only few had time and money enough—and if they had both of these—any idea of wading about in the swampy tulas with the chance of killing a grizzly bear or being killed.

The grizzly bear is the largest of his kind—a grim fellow, with extraordinary strength, and frequenting the wildest parts of the woods; he is often found weighing one thousand four hundred and more pounds, and a blow with his powerful paws would be death to anything living; but I am sure not half the dreadful stories you hear about him are true. Nearly everybody who has shouldered his rifle once, and gone a little way into the woods—especially if he was still rather green—has a bear story to tell when he comes out again; and since Old Grizzly never can testify to the contrary, they relate their feats with them so often, that they end by believing them themselves. From what I heard from old hunters about him—for it was never my luck to meet one in the woods—he runs like any other wild beast, when he hears the step of men, or gets their scent; and when wounded he sometimes grows angry—and who would not? The flesh of the young ones particularly is said to be very good, but I never tasted it.

Elk and Virginian deer, and two kinds of antelopes, frequent the wide and swampy plains; but in the mountains I found an old acquaintance, the common hare, which does not exist in the esatern states. Another inhabitant of Europe, which I never saw in the States, and which in fact does not exist on the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, is the European magpie, exactly the same in shape and colour as with us, except that it has a yellow bill.

The only beasts of prey are the small American Panther, some few wild cats, the cayotas or prairie wolves, and the large brown wolf, none of them however dangerous to man; for if you hear once in a while of a man having been attacked by cayotas, you may safely put it down as a hunter's story.

Snipes, ducks, and geese are in immense numbers along the borders of the bay, and all through the lower lands.

Just at this time the new Californian law was published, demanding from every foreign miner a licence of twenty dollars a-month, for the permission to dig in the mines. A revolution seemed to break out when this law was put in force, and the legislature who passed it ought to have had more sense than to throw a firebrand into the country. The law of course could not be upheld, for there were thousands who did not even make

more than their living, and some not that, getting provisions on credit, and not being able to pay for them afterwards; but still at first a parcel of rowdies made use of it, and where they found single foreigners in places they thought worth working, drove them out of them, sometimes even before the collectors had arrived in those parts, to give them at least a chance of taking out a licence or not.

The French got up a perfect revolution just at this time, and a war nearly broke out in the mines, while murders were already committed daily; and all this only on account of a parcel of men who could not see farther than their own noses, passing an impossible law, and strutting about and saying, "We have done a great thing, we have brought millions into the treasury."

Some foreigners, who had just at that time good claims, or such at least as they thought rich, had to pay the enormous licence for the first month, but the law had to be repealed directly, and was altered afterwards into twenty dollars a-year, and the first paid monthly licence was taken into account for the whole year.

CHAPTER VI.

THE INDIANS OF CALIFORNIA.

In the neighbourhood of Murphy's New Diggings, a large tribe of the Wynoot Indians camped; and though Americans not unfrequently tell dreadful stories about the treacherous character of these natives, I never found a more quiet and peaceable people in any country than they were.

When I reached the camp, the squaws—and a little warm water and soap would have decidedly improved their complexion—were busied in getting the sumptuous meal ready for their lords and husbands, and I had a beautiful chance of seeing the simple, but also most peculiar way in which they prepare their dinners. The main part of this seemed to consist of a soft mush of pounded acorns. They had dug—or, I rather believe, stamped—a small flat hole in the ground, in the shape of a round and deep dish, or a Java hat, or something like a Californian washing-

pan, beaten this as hard as possible, and filled it with the acorn-mush, already beaten up in one of their waterproof baskets. Upon this they had placed some light twigs, as I soon found, to protect the bowl itself, as they placed hot stones in it, which they put upon the twigs to make them sink slowly to the bottom. As they also poured some water in, to make the mush thinner, these twigs prevented the fluid from damaging the bottom of the vessel.

This kind of poe was soon prepared, and I now went towards a small family, to see it devoured. Of course, I looked around for a spoon; for I had thought up to this time, that such a thin, soup-like mush, could not be eaten in any other way but with some instrument at least resembling a spoon; but a fat, jovial native soon taught me better. He was, of course, the husband of the lady who brought him the basket filled with the soup, which she had ladled out with a flat calabash; and taking the basket between his knees, and trying first, rather carefully with one finger, if the mush had cooled enough to be eaten, he shoved the four fingers of his right hand into it, and then put them, apparently with the utmost satisfaction, into his wide and hospitably-opened organ of mastication, out of which they came directly afterwards clean and shining, and ready to repeat the operation,

till he had nearly finished half the basket. The thumb looked on all the time, accompanying the other four fingers down and up again, and only acting as a kind of preventative to hinder the hand from disappearing entirely.

When he had finished his meal—that is, when he could eat no more—he leant back groaning upon his seat. I thought then that a sip of brandy would aid his digestion, but he took the bottle rather distrustfully, and swilling twice at it—the second time far more carefully than the first—he handed it back to me, trying to make me understand by signs that he would tumble about if he drank that stuff, and become sick. To show me his gratitude, however, he pushed the basket with acorn-mush towards me, to benefit by a similar application of my fingers to the poe; but I declined the hospitable offer with partly the same fears as he entertained about the brandy. The squaw and the children soon afterwards took the basket between them; and it was a treat to see the way the large and little fingers went into it and out again.

While I was standing there, a couple of pretty young girls came from the woods, with flat baskets full of flower-seed emitting a peculiar fragrance, which they also prepared for eating. They put some live coals amongst the seed, and swinging it and throwing it together, to shake the coals and

the seed well, and bring them in continual and close contact without burning the latter, they roasted it completely, and the mixture smelled so beautiful and refreshing that I tasted a good handful of it, and found it most excellent.

They also brought great pine-apples—that is, real pine-apples—with a nut-like kernel, and many other delicacies, such as roasted grass-hoppers and baked wasps, &c., which I was too poor a connoisseur to do justice to.

The Indians on the whole American continent, with the exception of those farthest north perhaps, whose acquaintance I never had the pleasure of forming, have an indubitable family likeness. The colour of the natives from Canada down to Cape Horn, does not vary, in fact, so much in its shades of brown, through all the climes from the cold to the temperate, and torrid, and back again through temperate, and cold, as it does in the far smaller Australian continent; and they all have the long smooth black hair, the prominent cheek-bones, and the dark eyes. They differ, of course, in their stature, and life, and habits; nourishment and climate, are a very essential cause for it.

But if the natives of California resemble the Eastern tribes in stature and complexion, they do not most assuredly in warlike character, for they are really the most harmless nations on the American continent; let white people, who have

driven them to desperation, say what they please against them. Their weapons, if nothing else, plainly show this: they have no offensive arms at all, except bows and arrows, and these are small and powerless. The bow is not quite three feet long, of rather fragile wood, but covered with the broad back-sinew of the deer or ox. The arrows are about two feet long, with sharp points cut out of a kind of volcanic glass or rock. They wear a quiver made of the skin of some wild animal, fox, cayota, or racoon, sometimes even of their dogs, in which they never carry more than ten or twelve arrows. They go nearly naked, those at least who have not come into much contact with the whites; but in this case they are nearly always fond of some article of European dress. But dress is no necessity for them, even in the coldest weather; and I have seen, on nasty wet and cold days, Indians standing together, one or two wrapped up tightly in a thick and warm woollen blanket, while some had nothing in the world around them, offering their naked hides to the inclemency of the weather, and apparently not a bit colder than the others.

"Don't you feel cold, Indian?" an old backwoodsman, who was wrapped up in a warm, comfortable blanket-coat, once asked a North American Indian, who was trudging along the hard, frozen road, with nothing upon his back, but a thin and

tattered calico hunting-shirt, as he passed him on horseback.

"Do you feel cold in face?" the Indian asked in his short and broken way.

"No, not in my face," the white man answered.

"Well—me face all over!" the Indian said with a grin.

But as much as I like to see an Indian in his native dress or ornaments, be it as scanty as possible, equally funny and disfigured do they look, when they put on European clothes. They frequently have no idea for what purpose, and in what order they ought to be worn. First, a dress-coat, and then a waistcoat, then part of a shirt, or a waistcoat by itself, or a pair of trowsers, or three and four pair of them at the same time, they do not care; and they admire a uniform most—red, if possible, with gold or silver. I frequently saw Indians in the greatest heat with three pair of trowsers, the upper ones pulled up as high as they could get them, the second pair rolled up to their knees, and the undermost left to their natural length, to let all men see what a splendid wardrobe they called their own, and could afford. Cravats for garters, shirt-collars point downwards, waistcoats buttoned behind, and other mistakes continually occur; and like children they hang upon them what they can get, and sometimes even

what they can buy with hard-earned money, till they get tired of it, and throw it aside.

The women also rejoice to dress like European females, but as they never wash their dresses, they look rather the worse for it after the first two or three days. They most frequently, though, when they want something beside their usual wide and long apron of dressed deer-skins—which is coloured and fringed exactly as the North American Indians prepare them—throw a piece of calico around them, in the same way as the Spanish ladies use their mantilla.

Their government is, like that of their eastern brethren, hereditary chieftainship; and while all the single tribes have their own "capitano," as they now call them, at least if conversing with white men about them, several tribes together—as for instance, those on the southern waters of the Stanislaus, Calaveres, and Magualome—recognise a principal chieftain as their supreme head, who in all cases has to decide such matters and difficulties as arise between whites and Indians.

At that time their first chief lived on the Calaveres, and was called Jesus.

As to their religion, I never could find out what they believed. Those Indians close to the missions were, or had been at least, Christians; but farther up in the mountains nobody had cared about them, and in fact I hardly think they

troubled themselves about it. I never saw idols among them, or spoke to anybody who had; and from what I could learn about their superstitions, they only believe in some evil spirits, who can do them harm, and whom they adore to retain their friendship.

Here is a field for missionaries; here are quantities of souls to be saved, and in arm's-reach, too, of hundreds of preachers of all sects, Presbyterians and Methodists, Baptists and Roman Catholics; here they could do all those things which missionaries like to write about so frequently, undergo hardships, and even dangers, only for Christ's sake; but that is the very reason they do not go, because it would be "only for Christ's sake." There are no territories to be won, there are no natives to be enticed into building comfortable houses for the Christian teachers, they would have to lead a wild life with them, no farther profit in view as is the case with the South Sea Islands, but only the prospect of being driven with their pupils from one place to another, living on grubs, acorns, and other indigestible things; while, on the other hand, a comfortable life and a good income look far more inviting. What wonder then that you do not hear a word about missionary zeal in California, but see subscriptions daily raised in San Francisco, to erect churches and meeting-houses in the city—among the Christians.

But they are right; for what would be the use of saving those few souls, whose bodies will soon be driven under-ground? why take the last of the poor hunters away from the merry hunting-grounds of their forefathers? The Indians of California no longer exist in reality, though a few scattered tribes may wander about yet in the distant hills, looking towards the setting sun down upon a country which was once their own, and where the ashes of their forefathers were given to the balmy breeze, or buried under the shady oaks of the plains.

To prove to the reader that I am not exaggerating, I will only tell him one case I was witness of myself, to see how the Indians are treated in the mines, and in what way those stories arise, which are told about Indian aggressions!

On the 2nd of July, 1850, a black fellow—that is, not a negro, but a Bombay-man, of rather dark complexion for that race—came running into a little mining place, Douglas Flat, on the same creek that Murphy's New Diggings lay on; two Indians were following him, but when they saw he had taken shelter with the whites, they left off their pursuit, and walked back. But the India-man now told a dreadful story, how the natives had taken hold of him, and robbed him of nineteen hundred dollars in gold dust. Some Texians, who were accidentally in the trader's tent in which the Bombay-man had sought shelter, and possibly guided more by the hope

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

see what was the matter, and who scattered the fire before it had destroyed more than about half of the little village, everything that tribe before possessed, would have been devoured by the greedy flame.

The Texians, at last, when they saw they could not overtake the fleeter natives, fired several times at them, and they sent back a shower of arrows, but of course without doing the least harm, as they had to keep off as far as they could for fear of the bullets, and a distance of seventy or eighty yards made their light arrows powerless. At last, one of the Texians, heading the tribe as they followed up a narrow gulch to the top of the hill, got in shooting distance, and taking deliberate aim at one, shot him, from the low hill where he was standing, in the back. The poor fellow fell, but the others carried him off; and as the wood became thicker here, the Texian returned to the camp.

Next day, a delegation from the Indians came into Stoutenburgh, to inquire what they had done that the whites should make war upon them, and to tell the alcalde there—for they knew he was the capitano of the whites — that one of their number had been shot, and their village burnt by some of their white brethren.

A jury was sworn to go up to the ridge on which the Indians had now taken shelter; and when we reached the spot, where the women

looked at us in fear and despair, and the men in hate and anger, though they did not use their weapons against us, we found the poor fellow who had been shot the day before, standing upright under a tree. He had just raised himself when he heard of our coming, for I could see the bloody spot where he had lain a little while before. His wife was supporting him, and death was written on his countenance. The bullet had entered his back close to the back-bone, and seemed to have lodged inside, and had followed a slanting direction from a higher place, somewhere on the hip-bone. We had a doctor with us (as the man called himself), but he could do nothing for the poor fellow; and after hearing what account the Indians could give of the whole matter, and seeing on our return the burned camp with our own eyes, a trial was to be held next day upon the Bombay-man.

When we left the hill, and the mother of the poor Indian, who had probably thought white men sufficiently skilled in the art of medicine to heal the wounds they had inflicted, now saw them give him up, she commenced wailing over the murdered man; and while the wounded native again lay down under the tree, her shrill cries filled the air. I ran down the hill as fast as I could, to be out of hearing of those dreadful sounds. I was ashamed of being a white man at that moment.

Next day a jury sat; but the Bombay-man

understood no English, at least, he pretended not to do so now. Still everything was proved against him, and some traders from the next camp stood up as witnesses against him, stating on their oath that the nigger had not had even money enough with him the night before to pay for his drink, and that they had kicked him out of the tent. As it now appeared, the fellow had reached the night before the Indian camp, where he was hospitably received; but insulting the women, he was first repulsed, and then, not being satisfied with a first lesson, driven out of the camp by the men. Afterwards, I believe, he had again returned, and the natives had followed to chastise, but not to rob the rascal.

The trial of the Bombay-man was interesting, for nobody spoke his language, while he himself pretended not to understand a word of English; though one of the Yankees, a raw down-easter, tried once to play the interpreter, by bawling to him in English—which he thought the foreigner must understand, because he himself understood nothing else. But it was no go, and with circumstantial proof enough, they condemned him to twenty-five lashes, of which the sheriff gave him thirteen the next morning—accidentally the 4th of July—and one of the Indians the rest. But the natives were not satisfied with this, and swore they would kill him for raising a false cry against

them; and the sheriff had to keep him that night after the punishment in his own tent. When they led him out to receive his lashes, though the poor devil was perfectly convinced they were going to hang him, and he begged for his life bitterly.

This was one of the common Indian wars. "The natives had shot with arrows at the whites, and were driven back into their mountains," so the accounts ran; though, in reality, the whites behaved worse than cannibals towards the poor, inoffensive creatures, whom they had robbed nearly of every means of existence, and now sought to trample under foot.

But enough of this misery. The time is not far distant when the Indians of this immense territory will have ceased to exist; and it will then be interesting, at least, to know something of the tribes, though we did not care for them when living.

The character of these Indians in their mode and way of living, is exactly the same as with their eastern brethren, and, in fact, with nearly all wild tribes. The husband follows the chase, and the wife has to collect insects and seeds, or fruits, prepare the frugal meals, rear the children, carry the bundles and firewood, and, in fact, do nearly everything, while their lord walks about at his leisure with his light bow and arrow. But though this seems unjust, it is necessary; for, in a state of society where the lives of the family depend

upon the success of the hunter, he must have his arms free and unencumbered for action at every minute, and dare not toil under a heavy load, for it would make his aim unsteady.

But the gold discovery has altered their mode of life materially; they have learned to want more necessaries, while the means of subsistence has diminished; and driven at last to a thing they had never thought of before, the Californian Indians really work. At first they did it in right good earnest, and even for the whites; but though some tribes, principally the northern ones, can yet be hired for a short time, the southern nations have given it up again, and only work now rarely in families, nearly always to buy brandy for the gentlemen—in families, I say, for it is with these natives, as with all other lazy people, whenever they do work they cannot bear to see an idle person around them, and women and children have to be as busy as bees in such cases. Still they do not like to dig deep holes, and as they only in very rare cases can find gold near the surface, they nearly always try to get into places where white men have commenced digging, and are not very particular whether they have finished or not. They very cunningly wait for this purpose till the whites have gone to dinner, watching them in the morning, and jumping into the hole as soon as they have left, the men take their tools and work out the ground with the

pickaxe, while the women and children carry it off in their pans to the water and wash it out. If the miners return, upon a sign given by their sentinel, they all disappear; and the diggers sometimes find, where they had hoped to come to a good spot, a far greater space worked out for them in an hour or two than they had desired. But the poor fellows can only earn very little in this way; and whatever it be, they are cheated out of it again by the next trader they have to deal with.

They lay in provisions for winter-time, principally the sweet acorns of the plains, but also the bitter ones of the mountains, which they bury, as I was told, a certain time in the ground to remove the bitter and unpleasant taste. Besides these, their woods are rich enough in many other wild fruits; for instance, hazel-nuts, currants, grapes, cherries, strawberries, whortleberries, and many others, which they know how to dry and keep. The cherries deserve particular mention, for they grow in a peculiar way, like grapes, but on a tree similar to ours. They belong to the sour species, but taste exceedingly good.

Their habitations are as simple as possible, and consist, in summer-time especially, only of bush-huts, to ward off the hot rays of the sun; in the winter season, with some tribes, of bark-huts; with others, as on Feather River, of huts

made in a more substantial way of posts, and earthen walls, and roofs.

They have also a method of rubbing fire with two sticks of wood, but they do not use one piece of hard and another of soft wood for the purpose, as is commonly supposed, but two soft pieces, lying one down, and putting the other into it, and using it like a twirling stick, till the rubbed-off fine powder ignites very much in the same way as tinder.

And what will be the end of these tribes? As an answer, I will give the reader only the last part of a declaration of one of the United States' agents for Indian affairs, who had been authorized to lay down several tracts upon which the expelled Indians could reside unmolested, and who had been afterwards accused by the greedy gold-seekers, of having overstepped his authority, and given the red men the "best claims."

"A younger population is allowed to enter our land and collect the riches of our soil. It does not contribute anything to support the State, but returns whence it came, encouraging others to do the same. Notwithstanding, these very men deny the Californian Indian, and former legitimate owner of the soil,"—and I should think, in righteousness, not only the former but the present owner—"the right of working here, or, at least, of staying upon the spot which was once his own.

A population, perfectly strange to them, a great part of it even strangers to us, has taken possession of their former homes, destroyed their hunting-grounds and fisheries, burnt down their acorn groves, and cut them off from all those means of subsistence a kind Providence had created for their maintenance, and taken away from them the possibility of existing. But not satisfied with that, these men deny them even the right we have granted to the paupers and convicts of the whole world—viz., the right of working and existing.

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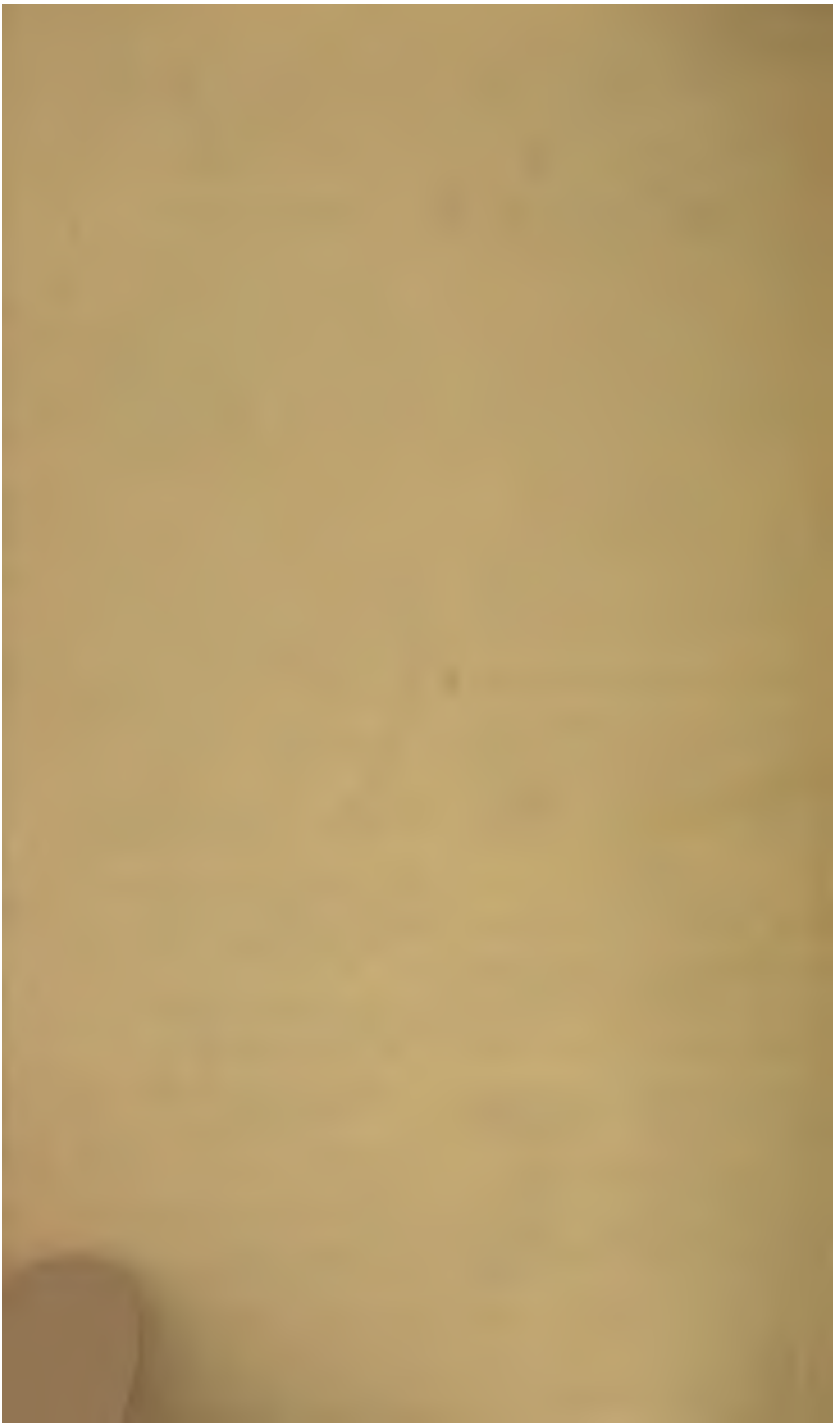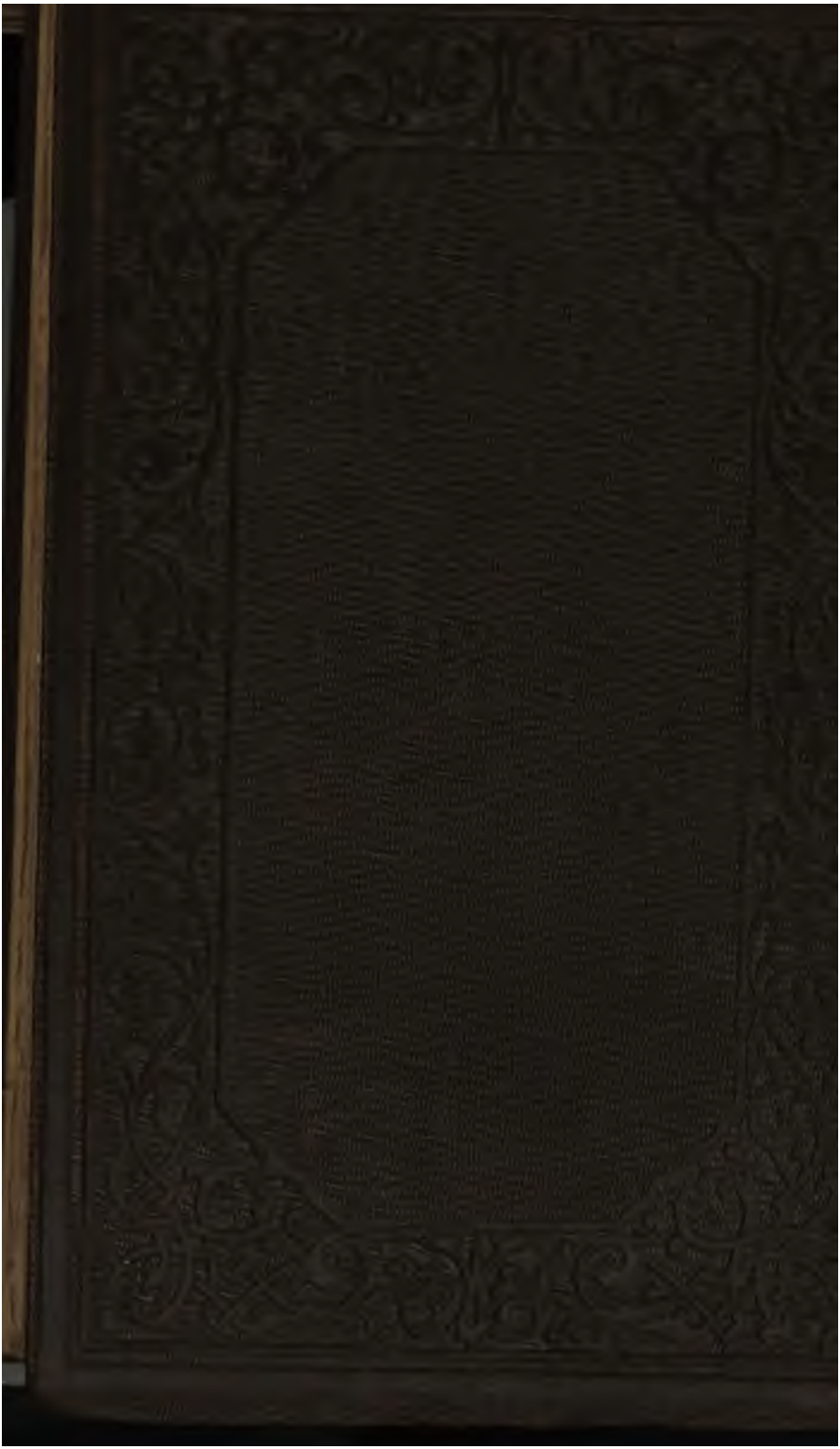
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